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Three Sermons against
Sacrilege – by Robert Pont.
Edinburgh. 1599.
Very rare.

PONT, Robert
c

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AGAINST Sacrilege,

Three sermons Preached by Maister ROBERT PONT: *an Aged Pastour in the* Kirk of God

Augustine.

Let God heare if they be deafe: Angelles heare if they contemne.

EDINBVRGH

PRINTED BY ROBERT *Walde-graue Prenter* to the Kings Majestie.

1599.

Cum Priuilegio Regio.

IN MY DEFENC
GOD ME DEFEND

TO HIS SOVERAINE, THE KINGS MAIESTIE.

SIR, I would think it an vnworthie thing to preſente your Highneſſe with ſuch a meane Pamphlet as this, taken out of my oraimal Sermones; vnleſſe the argument thereof craued a powerfull Protector and patrone. For beſides, it ſpeaketh the truth plainely, without coloured Rethoricke of wordes, the matter therein entreated, is odious in the eyes & eares of many, who find themſelues tuitched as guilty of Sacrilege. Herefore I could ſeeke no other retreate, but vnder your highnes wings: who (beſides ye would gladly heare the trueth ſimply ſpoken) haue alſo your parte in this turne. For your Highneſſe is no leſſe intereſt then the Kirk, in the wrongfull abuſing of the Kirk-rents. And as to me, the Lord knoweth how far it is from my heart, to procure willingly the hatred of any perſon, great or ſmal. Yet in reſpect of the charge I beare; and that it

is very vncomely for my gray-haires (my one foote being alreadie in the graue) to play the hypocrite or flatterers parte: But to discharge a good conscience in this and all other behalfes belonging vnto my calling: Herefore reposing vppon your Maiesties good minde and countenance against all calumniators of mee, for this my plaine dealing; and humbly submitting this and all other my laboures, to your hieneſſe censure and correction, in any thing I shalbe found to haue failed or spoken amisse, I humbly take my leaue: Beseeching the Lorde of Heauen to further and aduance all your Hieneſſe good and godly intentions, to the reformation of all abuſes within your Land.

Your Hieneſſe subject with
obedience and Prayer,

ROBERT PONT.

AGAINST SACRILEGE.

The first Sermon.

Rom: 2. 22.

Thou that deteſteſt Idols, doeſt thou commit Sacrilege?

IT Is of truthe that a certaine Poet ſai[illegible] when fooles eſchew one vice, they [illegible] an other. So may it be ſeene by the diſcourſe that the Apoſtle maketh in the ſecond part of this Chapter. Wee haue heard of before, how he begouth to inuey againſt the hypocriſie of the Iewes, who albeit they had the law of God, and gloryed therein; yet were they as greate tranſgreſſoures as the Gentiles, who had but the law of Nature, written obſcurely in their harts: and ſo were highlier to be accuſed then the other. To prooue this

he bringeth in, the euident examples of their liues; being polluted with moſt groſſe ſinnes, contrarie the doctrine of the law, which they taught vnto others; namely, of adulterie, thieft, &c. And as to thieft, not being content to accuſe them in general; he laieth to their charge (in the wordes now to be intreated) the moſt hainous kinde thereof, commonlie called Sacrilege: And with that, ſharply he diſcoueres their hypocriſie, whereas they would appeare outwardly to keepe ſome poyntes of the lawe; in the meane time, tranſgreſſing againſt as great heads of the ſame. For they profeſſed themſelues, *To abhorre Idols*, and Idole ſeruice, and yet foſtred a great Idole in their hearts, by committing Sacrilege, thereby robbing God of his due honour, and thinges belonging to the maintenance of his true ſeruice. And ſo, albeit they worſhipped not Idols outwardly, yet they offended in the like kinde of ſinne, and thereby profaned Gods holy name, which was blaſphemed amongſt the Gentiles by their occaſion, as will hereafter follow.

And this they did in deede in the daies of PAVLL, not onelie by ſtealing of God his honour from him, by preferring their owne traditions aboue his holy commandements; and by caſting off his due reuerence and feare, which is an high kinde of Sacrilege; but alſo by their wicked and deteſtable auarice (which is a kinde of Idolatrie alſo) they abuſed Gods true worſhipping, eſteeming more of the golde of the Temple, nor of the Temple it ſelfe: And (as our Sauiour reprocheth them) preferring the gift of the Altar, aboue the Altar and offring thereon: yea, this Idole of ſacrilegious auarice, was ſo highlie honored amongſt them, that the verie office of the chiefe Prieſtes was bought and ſould for money. And with this there lacked not amongſt them ſuch Sacrilegious impietie, as is rebuked by the Prophet MALACHIE, in defrau- Mal. 3.
ding the Lorde and his Miniſterie of his teindes and dewe offrings, appoynted for the intertainment of his ſeruice. So the Apoſtle concludeth moſt juſtly, the Iewes aſwell as the Gentiles, to be vnder the wrath of God, and that they cannot

be iuſtified by the workes of the lawe, more then the Gentiles, and therefore muſt needes ſeeke to the iuſtification of faith in Chriſt.

Now (before we proceede further in the matter of iuſtification) becauſe mention is here made eſpecially of ſacrilege; ſeeing the ſame was, neuer more abundant at any time then in this corrupt age; and namelie in this Realme, notwithſtanding the cleare light of the Goſpell ſhining amongſt vs: I thinke it both expedient & neceſſarie to make ſome large diſcourſe thereupon: as a common place moſt meete to be teached in our daies. For it is marvaile to conſider, and hard to be beleued of the godly in other cuntries; ſeeing the doctrine of ſaluation is daily ſo cleerely beaten in the eares of all eſtates of this land, with what impudent faces, all ſortes of men, and namely they of the greater ranke, being intangled in this crime, advowe their doings, and ſtande for no admonitions to their accompte to acknowledge, let bee to amende that filthy fault, whereby the holie worde of God is ſlandered in their

per-

perſones, and they giue ouer-good occaſion to Papiſtes to raile againſt the word of truth, who cry out and affirme, that many Princes, Noble-men, Earles and Barronnes, for that cauſe haue caſten off the yoke of the Romane Kirk, that they may the more freely inuade and poſſeſſe at their pleaſure the Kirk goods: Doubtles they who giue occaſion to ſo greate a ſlander, ſhall render a very ſeuere count vnto God: and the very Heathen that haue decored, and in ignorance beſtowed largely vpon their Idole ſeruice, ſhall ſtand vp to condemne the ſacrilegeous impietie of theſe men in the latter day.

Then to enter in the deduction of this matter, I minde firſt (as the Lord wil aſſiſt mee) to declare how diuerſlie the name of Sacrilege is taken by writers, and how many kindes thereof there be. Then to take the proper definition of Sacrilege, and applie it to the purpoſe and matter, whereupon I am to intreate: And to theſe whome I account to be ſacrilegious amongſt vs, which ſhalbe the ſubject of this preſent Sermon. In the nexte place or Sermon, I am purpoſed to an-

ſwere

ſwere & meete the obiections, that ſuch men as we call Sacrilegious may vſe, and commonly vſe for their excuſe. And thirdly, in the laſte ſermon, to declare what puniſhment the law of God, and alſo the lawes of men haue appoynted for Sacrilegious perſons, with rehearſall of enſamples of extraordinary puniſhments execute by God againſt ſuch, aſwell mentioned in the Scriptures, as by profane writers and Hiſtories. And finallie, to ſpeake of the bleſſing of the Lorde beſtowéd vpon them who did advance his ſeruice, and contribute liberallie of their ſubſtance, for the vp-holding and furthering thereof. So that our exhortation may tende, if not to prouoke others to the like liberalitie, at leaſt to mooue them to abſteine from ſuch vngodly dealing, as to abſtract and greedely apply to their owne profite & particular vſes, that which hes bene giuen of others of good zeale (euen in the time of ignorance) to vp-hold the ſeruice of God, ſo far as the giuers thereof then vnderſtoode. The Lord graunt that our proceedings may be to his glorie, and that his worde may

fructi-

fructifie in our hearts.

To begin then to explaine what wee cal Sacrilege, I finde the worde taken diuerſe waies by writers. For (becauſe the crime properly called Sacrilege, is odious) commonly all haynous offences committed againſt publicke Lawes of God or man, are named Sacrilegious. As the Poet calles them Sacrilegious handes that murthered CAESAR. The practiſes of Sorcerers and harlots are called Sacriligeous artes. In like maner, the violence done to Parents, Magiſtrates, or their lawes; and generally all things that ingender publick infamy or ſlander, may bee ſo denominate in deteſtation of the committers thereof. But Sacrilege properly taken, hath reſpect vnto God, and offenſes done againſt his divine majeſtie; either by blaſpheming or profanation of his holy name, or by aſcribing his glorie to creatures, or by contempte of his ſeruice or religion, or by abuſing of thinges dedicate to the maintenance thereof: or turning the ſame to profane vſes. And in ſumme, it comprehendeth al robberie or ſtealing of holy things, as the word

worde it ſelfe by interpretation beares. Trueth it is, that commonly among the Gentiles (who aſcribed all the Majeſtie and honour of their Gods vnto Idoles) the name of Sacrilege was appropriate to that which was robbed from their Idols, or taken from their Temples, wherinto & certaine vaine and ſuperſtitious ceremonies they placed their whole Religion. As the Papiſtes following the like ſuperſtition, commonly count no other Sacrilege, but the robbing of their relicques, & other rich apparrell of their Temples and Idols. But indeed it is eaſie to prooue by the Scriptures, and alſo by beſt approoued laws of men; that which is properly to be counted Sacrilege, to be more largely extended, then to ſuch a narrow compaſſe. For beſides things immediatly done againſt the honor & majeſtie of God (whereof I ceaſe nowe to ſpeake) I finde Sacrilege may be defined to comprehend & conteine vnder it alſo all robberie, or vnlawfull intrometting, bying, or ſelling of holy things; as by the enſamples and teſtimonies following, may be euidently prouen.

For

For it is not to be doubted but ACHAN, in the dayes of IOSVA, thiefteouſly meddling with the excommunicate ſpoile of *Ieritho*, committed thereby deteſtable Sacrilege, as the puniſhment execute againſt him did declare: Al-be-it theſe thinges were not taken out of any materiall Temple. Likewiſe HOPHNI & PHINEAS, ſonnes of HELI the Prieſt, who ſpoyled and reſte from the people, the Ram-fleſh of the ſacrifices, before the fat was offred vnto the Lorde, according to the Law, cannot be excuſed of haynous Sacrilege. The like is to be eſteemed of the people, whome the Prophet MALACHIE rebuked, for defrauding of the Lord, and ſpoyling him of his teindes & offrings; for the which cauſe, hee pronounceth them accurſed. And in the New Teſtament, were not ANANIAS & SAPPHIRA, guilty of the ſacrilege, defrauding and ſtealing from the Apoſtolicall Kirk, the juſt price of the fielde ſolde by them? Their ſuddane exterminion to death by the mouth of PETER, doth beare witneſſe. And would not SIMON the Sorcerer, by bying the gifts of the holy

Ioſu. 7.

1. Sam. 2.

Malach. 3.

Act. 5.

Act. 8.

ly Ghoſt, haue committed execrable Sacrilege. For the which PETER threatned him with vtter deſtruction. So Sacrilege wee ſee, may be committed many waies, although no materiall Temples be robbed or ſpoyled. In the ciuill lawes alſo, ſet out by Chriſtian Emperours, it is not onely counted Sacrilege, if any man do violence or injurie vnto Prieſtes or miniſters of God (which kinde of ſacrilege is ouer-rife alſo in our daies) or to diuine ſeruice, or place wher it is miniſtred; but alſo generally, if any breake Gods holy law: and in ſpecial, whoſoeuer of knowledge, toucheth or taketh things deſtinat to religious vſes; and maketh no ſcruple to buy or ſell, or with-draw the ſame any way, are ſaid in theſe laws to haue fallen *in crimen læſæ religionis*, which is Sacrilege.

L. Siquis in hoc genus ſacrilegij. C. de Epiſcopis & clericis L. Qui diuina C. de crimine Sacrilegij C. de ſepulchris violato. L. 1.

Now if any man would demand what be thoſe holy things, or how far be they extended, wherof we account the intrometting to be Sacrilegious: I anſwer, according to the Scriptures. All things ſeparate from the common vſe of men, whether it be man or beaſt, or lande of inhe-

inheritance, together with all the teinds of the landes and other things destinate for holy vses, are saide to bee *most holy vnto the Lord:* as is expressely conteined in the last Chapter of *Leuiticus*: And a little before it is said, nothing that any man doth dedicate vnto the Lorde of ought that he hath, be it man or beast, or land of his possession, may be sould or analyed. And if a man would redeeme any thereof, hee should adde a fift part thereunto. So that he may not lawfully diminish any of that thing which hath bin dedicate to an holy vse. As also by the sacred cõstitutiones of Emperours & Princes, such things cannot be annalied nor ingaged, vnlesse it be in great necessitie: as for the relief of the poore or captiues: for al these holy things are said to be in no mans possession, but to appertein to God his right. So vnder the name of holy thinges are to be included, first all thinges that bee holy of their owne nature, as are the spirituall giftes of God bestowed vpon his Kirke, which Simon the sorcerer would haue bought: And generallie, whatsoeuer perteineth immediatly to the glory Leuit. 27.

and

and honour of Gods holy Majestie. Of the which sorte are the holy Scriptures and doctrine conteined therein, the which to violate is most haynous Sacrilege, so as IOHN testifieth in the end of the Revelation, whosoeuer adde anie thing thereto, God shall adde against him the plagues written in the booke: & whosoeuer taketh any thing there-fra, God shal take & rase out his name out of the book of life. From the which kinde of Sacrilege, the Papistes of our daies cannot bee excused, who haue falsifyed the writings of the auncient Fathers exponing the Scriptures: either by fathering vpō them such works as they neuer writ, or by adding, altering, or diminishing their sayings, to foster & mainteine corrupt doctrine: And namely, by that Treatise lately come to light, which they cal *Index expurgatorius*, wherin they note all such places as make against their superstition: and will haue all Imprenters of bookes, whom they may commande, to delete and omitte all such sentences, as they haue thought meete to be razed out of these workes. Of this sorte are also they

they who apply the Scriptures to vngodly and prophane vses, as to diuinish sorcerie & charmes, or to Idolatrie, or prophane iesting and mockage. In this first ranke also, are to be counted the Sacraments of Christ annexed to the worde, which in like manner haue bene corrupted by the Papistes, ministring them without doctrine, and adding thereto many superstitious rites of their owne inuentions.

Nexte, in the second order of Sacrilege, wee place the violence done to the Ministers of God, either in their bodies or in their office, who are called holy in respect of their function. For albeit al the faithful be called, *the Saints or holy ones of the Lord, and who toucheth them, toucheth the apple of his eye*, as the Prophete speaketh, yet of the Prophets and Pastours in special, it is saide: *Touch not mine anoynted, and doe my Prophets no harme.* So they that inuade or hurt the in their persons, especially, for the holy ministerie sake, are culpable of great sacrilege: touching they be worthy of the titles of Pastoures and ministers, and do the duey appertai-

Zach. 2.

Psal. 105.

ning to that charge. For they are ane chiefe parte of the Holie Temple of God, which may be highly violated, if violence be done to them in their persons or in their office. In the third roome are to be placed things dedicate to the holy seruice of GOD, for maintenance thereof, such as are the Teindes, Landes, and possessiones appoynted for that vse. For although they of themselues in their owne nature may bee counted commoun and profane, like to others earthlie possessiones; yet in so farre as they are annexed to holy vses, and can not bee separate with-out the decaye thereof, they may well bee called, and ought to bee repute holy. So it may bee well concluded, that who-so-euer invade or vsurpe vnlawfully any of such holy thinges, therein committes Sacrilege. Concerning the which Sacrilege, becauſe it is moſt common in this Land, and yet holden by many no great sinne, but rather a lawfull conqueſt, to appropriate such thinges to mennes private vses. I minde specially to inciſte and make some large discourſe, not onelie in this

this dayes Sermon, but (if God graunte me habilitie) the two Sabboth-daies hereafter following.

To enter then to speake more particularlie of this laste kinde of Sacrilege, I finde it to bee diuided in the auncient Cannons in three sorts, to witte, when thinges called holie, either are taken out of an holie place, or holy thinges out of a profane place, or thinges not holy out of an holy place. Al-be-it some Ciuill Lawes call it not Sacrilege but theefe, to take priuate mennes goodes out of a Sanctuarie or holie place. Alwaies, to speake according to the Scriptures, wee may gather by examples thereof, all these three kindes to bee counted as Sacrilege: For al-be-it the name of Sacrilege be rarely founde in the Bible, and peraduenture not expressed in all the Olde Testamente; yet it is alike, if wee finde the equivalente thereof, as when medling with Holie or Excommunicate thinges, is called in Hebrew *Kherem* or spoyling of GOD, for the which hee pronounceth a curse

17. Q. 4. Quisquis

vpon the doers thereof. As when NEBVCHADNETZAR spoyled the holy vessels and other pleniſhing out of the Temple of God in Ieruſalem, al-be-it that plague come of the Lord, yet no doubte he committed a great ſacrilege, by taking of theſe holy things out of an holy place. Which made CYRVS (although he was an Heathen King) hauing ſome ſponke of Religion, to ſend theſe veſſelles againe to the houſe of God. Alſo, to prooue it to be Sacrilege to take away holy things, al-be-it not out of an holy place or Sanctuarie, the enſamples before adduced ſufficiently prooue. As to the thirde, the treaſures layde vp in the Temple of Ieruſalem by priuate perſons, and taken away firſt by IOAS King of *Iſrael*, and thereafter invaded by HELIODORVS at commandement of king SELEVCVS, no man can ſay but both the on and the other were mooued with a ſacrilegeous greede, to apply the ſame to their owne commoditie. The plague wherewith HELIODORVS was ſmitten, may well ratifie it to be truth.

2 King. 4.
2. Mac. 3.

But

But as to theſe two ſortes of ſacrilege, to wit, to robbe & take away holy things out of an holy place; or vnholy things out of an holy place, we need not in this corrupt age to vexe our ſelfs much therwith. For who wil now commit any treaſures to be kept in Kirkes, ſeeing the moſt part of them be as open as the Kirk-ſtile, as wee vſe to ſpeake. And to robbe any thing out of them, it will not in-rich the ſacrilegious, vnleſſe it bee ſome poore thiefe for neceſſitie, to rob a peece of a benke or window-bands, or ſuch trifles. Therefore it is the ſecond kinde of Sacrilege that we haue to intreate of, concerning the rich ſacrilegious thieues, who meddle not with ſmall matters, but with landes, teindes, and great poſſeſſions, not regarding in what place things dedicate to the holy ſeruice of God be founde, ſo they may catch & apprehend them. And firſt this I gather for a good ground, vpō that which hath bin already ſpoken, that al they who appropriat to their own priuate vſes, the patrimonie and rents of the Kirk, defrauding thereby, & diſappointing the Miniſtrie, the ſchooles, and the

poore, of that which should iustlye perteine to them, are to be holden sacrilegious. And consequently, that there be mo sacrilegious in *Scotland* (considering the quantitie and reuenues thereof) then in any other countrie, that hath embraced the true light of the Gospell of Iesus Christ. Whereof almost all men amongst vs will bee called professours; but in that poynte, not a fewe number are become transgressoures.

Then to compare time with time, & our estate with the estate of the people of the Iewes; wee may vnderstande and perceiue, as in the daies of PAVLL, when he wrote this Epistle, the Iewish people were ridde of externall Idolatrie, hauing their temple purged frō the pollution of the Gentiles; & hauing liberty graunted vnto them to vse and exercise their Religion: So hes the Lord deliuered vs of his mercie from the Papisticall Idolatrie, & our Temples from their superstition: yea and freede vs from the tyranny of them that helde vs in the thraldome of conscience. Yea, (I say) our estate hath bene far better in this behalfe, then that of the

Iewes. For as to them, although they had an outward face of Religion, purged from externall Idolatrie; yet the doctrine of god his law, was in many chief points corrupted, by falſe and wrong wreſting and exponing thereof, by the Scribes & Phariſees, and others pretending themſelues to be Doctors thereof. Whereas, (praiſe be to God) ſince the firſt reforma- of religion amongſt vs, the poore doctrine of the Goſpel hath bene continued in ane eſtate, without anye ſubſtantiall poynte of errour, with diſcipline agreeing thereunto. And whatſoeuer hath bin caſt in by Satan to diſturbe the ſame, the Lorde hath not ſuffred him hitherto to preuaile. But as the byers & ſellers were not caſt out of the Temple of *Ieruſalem*, albeit Chriſt with his whippe preaſſed diuerſe times to expel them: So for al the crying out and preaching of the faithful meſſengers of God, with threatnings vſed againſt ſuch perſones; yet they ceaſe not, but adde daylie more and more, aſwell they of the nobilitie, as others following their enſample, to robbe, ſpoyle, buye, conqueſt & occupy the kirk-rents.

Here-

Herefore, if the Iewes might justly be accused by the Apostle, who being contented to haue a bare knowledge of the Law of God, liued no better then they that lacked a law: How much more we, who bragge of a sincere knowledge of the Gospell, as being needfull to order our liues thereby, not onely liue otherwise licentiously, but also many amongst vs (so far as in vs lyeth) stoppe and hinder the propagation of the kingdome of Christ: In so farre, that they holde him a man of no accounte, hauing any power in these corrupted dayes, who hath not polluted his handes with some spoyle of the Kirk-goods. And as to the doctrine of the worde, it is so become loathsome to these men, that if they heare it, they heare it with deafe eares, & are no more mooued at the rebuke of this their sacrilegious dealing, not if they were stupide blockes or Idols, without all sense of hearing. For they cease not still to maintaine and aduance this detestable sinne: And daylie inuente new practises and coloured titles of the law, to augment and foster the same, both in heart and deede.

Nor

Notwithstanding that such deuourers of Christ his patrimonie are reckoned by the godly Fathers, to be murtherers of the poore: for it is a certaine kinde of murther indeed.

And to this purpose, I will here cite certaine of the authorities of the auncientes, that it may bee knowne how odious this sinne of Sacrilege was in their eies. AVGVSTINE vppon IOHN speaking of IVDAS the traitour, writeth this. IVDAS is amongst the Saintes; IVDAS is a thiefe, yea a sacrilegeous thiefe, not a thiefe of the common sorte. A thiefe of purses, if criminall persones of all kinde of thiefte be damned in judgement: more of that thiefte which is called *peculatus*. For *peculatus* is the thiefte of publick things. And thiefte of priuate thinges is not so judged as publick thiefte. How much more detestablie is a sacrilegious thiefe to be judged? Who dare be bolde to steale, euen from the Kirk of God. Who stealeth any thing from the Kirke, from that foorth is compared to one that is lost. This farre AVGVSTINE. In an other place, calleth the teindes, the tribute of needy soules.

Ioh. 12.

Citatur qu. 2. autem Ex. lib. de off.

And that ſo manye poore as dye in default of paymente thereof by famine, they that with-holde the ſame, and apply them to their owne particular vſes, are to bee holden guyltie before the juſtice ſeate of God, of ſo many murthers. AMBROSE likewiſe willeth, that the goods of the Kirke be giuen to the vſe of the poore, rather then the ſacrilegious enemie, to ſpoyle and carry the ſame away. And HIEROME writeth thus, To bereaue any thing from a friend is thieft, but to defraude the Kirk is ſacrilege. To reſerue that which is to be beſtowed vpon the poore and hungrie, is ether craftines or feareſulnes, but to with-draw any thing from it, is a moſt manifeſt impiety, and paſſeth the crueltie of all robbers. I might cite many auncient Cannons of councelles, to this effect (beſides the cannons & authorities of Biſhops of *Rome*, which are innumerable, & others mentioned in the decrees collected by GRATIAN) but for ſhortnes I remit them that liſt to reade of this matter, to the ſeuen & eight Cannons, of the councell called *Gangrenſe*, holden about the yeare of

12. Q. 2. Aurum ex libr. de offic.

12. Q. 2. Gloria,

Christ. 324. Item, the Councel of *Carthage* 4. cap. 31. & 32. And of *Antioche* cap. 25. Item, the Councell called *Agathense*, holden about the 440. in diuerse Cānons thereof: with many other to the like purpose: Yea, the Ethnike PLATO writeth in his lawes; that of all haynous doings, it is to be counted on of the greatest that is done against holy things. And further he saieth, the sacrilegious holde one of three thinges, either that God is not, or that he regardeth not the thinges done by men, or at leaste, wilbe easily reconciled, when such impietie is committed with sacrifices, and such ceremonies as were vsed amongst the Gentiles. *De legibus lib. 10.*

But now to take vp this matter for the presente, it is expedient to declare howe this Idole of sacrilegious avarice first begouth to take roote amongst vs; and by what meanes it was increased and nurished: And finally, what great and hydeous branches it hath spred through the whole cuntrie. The beginning indeede was small in respect of the increase: For at the first reformation of Religion amongst vs, they who tooke the worke in

hand,

hand (which were an few part) mooued of a pure zeale to Gods glorie, and aduancemēt of the Gospel of Iesus Christ, stood not to hazard life, lands, and whatsoeuer they had, to promoate the good cause: and according to their zeale, the Lord granted them a good issue of their enterprise. Yet a great many, not onely of the raskall sorte, but sundry men of name and worldly reputation, joyned themselues with the congregation of the reformers, not so much for zeale of religion, as to reape some earthly commoditie, and to be inriched by spoyle of the Kirkes and Abbey places. And when the Preachers told them that such places of Idolatrie should be pulled downe, they accepted gladly the enterprise, & rudely passing to worke, pulled down all both Idoles & places where they were found. Not making difference betweene these places of Idolatrie, and many Parish-Kirks, where Gods word should haue bin preached in many parts where they resorted, as in such tumultes and suddainties vseth to come to passe, namelye, among such a nation as we are. So their

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perſones (I meane ſo manye of them that had more reſpecte to the ſpoyle of Kirks not to religion) I count to haue bene the firſt ſacrilegious amongſt vs.

With theſe I ioyne an other ſorte, both of Gentlemen and labourers of the grounde, that were put in hope to haue their reindes al-to-gether diſcharged: and in that reſpect (rather then any zeale of religion) did aſſiſte the reformation. Nowe albeit, they were fruſtrate of their expectation, yet their intention being to appropriate the Kirk rentes to their own vſe, they cannot be excuſed at leaſte of ſacrilegious meaning.

Another thing fell out at that time, which may be excuſed by reaſon of neceſſitie, when as the Lordes, and ſome of the Nobilitie, principall enterpryſers of the reformation, hauing to doe with the *French* men, and many their aſſiſters of our owne Nation enemies to theſe proceedings, were forced not onely to ingage their owne landes, and beſtowe whatſoeuer they were able to furniſh of their owne patrimonie, for maintenance of men of warre, and other charges, but

also to take the Lead & Belles, with other Iewelles and ornaments of Kirkes, abbayes & other places of superstition, to employ the same and the prises thereof to resist the enemies. The most parte of the Realme beand in their contraries. This I say, cannot be altogether blamed. For in like cases wee finde examples in the Scriptures, how things dedicated euen to the true seruice of God, for necessities cause, were distracted and employed to stay the fury of enemies, not onely by such Kinges as had made defection from the puritie of Religion, but also by one of the most godly Kings of *Iuda*, EZECHIAS by name, who gaue to the king of *Ashur, to pacifie his inuasion, not onely all the money that was founde in the house of the Lorde, and in the Kings treasurie, but also pulled off the plates that couered the doores of the Temple, and the Pillers which he himselfe had couered with golde.* And by the Ciuill Lawes, and Cannons of councelles, it is permitted for necessities cause (as for ransoming of Captaines) to alienate such things, as be dedicat to the seruice of God. But this is no excuse to them, who in that

2. King. 18.

time

time of tumult for their owne particular gaines cauſe, medled either with gold, ſilver, or other thing that mainteined the Idolatrie & ſuperſtitiō of Papiſts. For they could not vſurp it with good conſcience. Although (for eſchewing of great inconueniences, there was a law, and act of parliamēt made, to abſolue thē before men, called the acte of Obliuion. Albeit I can not ſee how theſe men (not being conſtrained for maintenance of the publick actiō) may be ſufficiētly excuſed in good cōſcience before God; that meddle with either bels, lead, relicques, Iewels, ſtones, timber, or ſuch like things of any effectual valure, taken by thē of the demoliſhing of abbeies, cathedral kirks, Frieries, nunries, or any ſuch like places, which ought rather to haue bin beſtowed vpō the kirks affaires, or vpō the poor. And in tokē that God was offended with thē, making the ſpoile of the kirk to cleaue to their hands; it was ſhortly ſeene, that the Lord did blow vpon it, that it vaniſhed away from the moſt part of them. And they that thinke now to make profit by ſpoyling the kirk, ſhall feele a judgment of God following

them

them, as many of them already confesse by experience, that their houses are nothing enriched, but rather damnified therby. For there followeth such a curse, & secret mishap vpō that kinde of gaith, that when euen for necessarye causes, it is applyed to profane vses, oftentimes, it neither profiteth them that giue it, nor that receue it. EZECHIAS was not delivered from SENNACHERIB, for al that he gaue him. For he immediatly brake his promise. And the Lead that was taken off our Kirkes and Monasteries, a greate parte perished by Sea, and an other was little advantage to them who medled therewith.

But all this was of small accounte, in respect of that which after hath followed, and dayly falleth out in this vnruly common-wealth. For from the yeare of our Lorde 1560. vnto this present time, the greatest study of all men of power of this land, hes bene by all kinde of inventions, to spoyle the Kirk of Christ of her patrimonie, by chopping and changing, diminishing of rentals, cōuerting of victual in small sumes of money: setting of

fewes

fewes within the availe, long tackes vpon tackes, with two or three life-rentes, with many twentie yeares in an tack, annexationes, erectiones of Kirk-rents, in temporall liuings and heritage, penfiones, ſimple donationes, erecting of new patronages, vnion of teindes, making of new Abbattes, Commendatares, Priors, with other Papiſtical titles, which ought to haue no place, in a reformed Kirk and cuntrie; with an infinite of other corrupt and fraudfull waies, to the detriment and hurte of the Kirke, the ſchooles, and the poore, without any ſtay or gaine-calling: till all the reuenues of the Kirke are ſo wracked, that the poſteritie may looke for a playne decay of Religion, which cannot ſtande vnleſſe it be holden vp by preaching; and preaching cannot be had without prouiſion; vnleſſe God by ſome meanes put to his merciſull hand, and remeid theſe euils. For this deceitfull Idole of auarice, in ſpoyling the Kirke goodes, hath ſo ſeaſed the ſelfe in mens heartes, that amongſt vs, the meanes are already taken away in many parts, where by the ordinarie miniſterie ſhould be ſu-

steined. Yea, a great part of the Realme lacke Pastours and Ministers. The Kirks are reuiued, and manye of them made Sheepe-coates, or applyed to more filthy vses. O; what barbarous cruelitie is it to beholde and suffer so many poore soules perishing, for lacke of their ordinarie foode! which is, the word of God, not onely in the out-Iles, Hie-landes, and Bordoures of *Scotland*, but also in many partes of the Law-lande; so that either Papistrie and Idolatrie must needes enter in againe, or either plaine Athiesme take place, with all contempt of Religion, amongst these miserable destitute people. And what a count shall they giue vnto God, that are the cause, not onely of murthering the poore, by withdrawing from them the foode of their bodies, but by causing so many soules lacke the Spirituall foode, whereby they should be nourished vnto euerlasting life in Christ, by their insatiable auarice?

Trueth it is, Parliamentes haue bene conveened, and actes haue bene made, for providing Ministers of competent liuinges, for reparaling of Parish Kirkes,

for trayning vp the youth in ſchooles of Theologie. It hath bene alſo promiſed, and ſubſcribed in writte, by a greate parte of the Nobilitie, that the poore labourers of the grounde, ſhould haue an eaſe and reliefe of the rigorous exacting of their teindes: and many other good thinges haue bene deviſed, tending to the advancement of the glorie of GOD, and eſtabliſhing of Chriſt his Kingdome. Amongſt vs, namely, in time of the gouernemente of that good Regente (whome for honoures cauſe I name) who although he could not doe all that hee woould haue done, (hauing ſo manie hinderances and enemies;) yet his dooings might haue bin a perfite paterne of Godlineſſe to the reſte of the Nobilitie, to make them bene content to liue vppon their owne rentes, and to ceaſe from robbing and ſpoyling the Patrimonie of the Kirke. But experience hath declared, and dayly doth declare, the moſte parte of ſuch profeſſoures, vnder-takers of Religion, and for-ſiking of Idolatrie, to haue ſought, and yet ſeeke none other thing,

but to pull to them-selues the Kirke-goodes possest by Papistes: And to foster as a Serpente in their bosome, that venemous Idole of auarice. For all insatiable auaricious persones, are Idolaters indeed; and it cannot be, but by making a God of vnlawful gaine, they deny the liuing God, dishonoring him most ignominiously, by setting in their hearts that Mammon of iniquitie (which they loue better then him) in his place. And if all auariceous men, generally after this maner may be called Idolaters; how much more they, who spare not to fil their houses with the spoile of the Lord his house, and of the poore. *How dare they either call vpon his Maiestie, or come in his house of praier or take his name in their mouth, whose harts are polluted?* Doutles, (as the Psalmes testifie) GOD shall set himselfe a seuere judge against them, & set their offenses before their faces, to their just condemnation, without they amende their doings, whereof there is ouer little appearance in many of them.

Esai. 1. Psal. 50.

What better are these men, with their feined profession, then the souldiers that cru-

crucified Christ our Sauiour? to haue his garments to parte amongst them? yet in some case they are worse, for they will not be contented with vsuall partage, nor to cast lottes for Christes coate, but euerie one would pull from another; some the Landes, some the teindes; some the patronages, some the Prelacies, some the other benefices: Ay the mightier prevailing against them of lesse power, & such as they may hinder. And albeit, there be many vngodly contentiones and controversies in the lande (namely, amongst great men) yet for no cause arise there so many pleadings in the lawe, as for the teinds & ecclesiastical goods: how many brealings and debates? how many convocations of the Kings lieges; yea, how much shedding of bloud in diuerse parts is committed for such causes. In the meane time, the poore labourers of the grounde, who should haue had an ease and moderation of the seuere payment of their teindes, to relieue their necessities, (they being so hardly handled by their maisters and ouer-lordes in other cases) not only get no commoditie there

eſt, but ſuffer great damnage, being compelled to leede the whole teindes, both corne and ſtraye to the vſe of their greedye maiſters, or others vnjuſte poſſeſſours of the ſame, to their vine-yairdis, yea, ſometimes the ſtocke, and remanent of their cornes is wracked, and put in poynte of ruinfell, for lacke of tymous teinding. I cannot tell if any man of good conſcience, or that truely feareth GOD, ſhould ſtudie or labour to ſtay or compone theſe controverſies that riſe in the land for the Kirk goodes, amongſt ſuch greedie and vnlawfull poſſeſſours of the ſame. The Miniſters of the word in the meane time, not being ſufficiently prouided, nor the other affaires of the Kirk furniſhed, with the neceſſities of the poore: wherefore the teindes in ſpeciall were appoynted, who are altogether neglected, and idle bellies, with ſuch as are rather enemies then friendes to the true Kirk of Ieſus Chriſt, ſoſtred and vpholden thereupon. For the which cauſe, amongſt many others, the wrath of God is threatned continually from time to time, & may moſt juſtly fal vpon this vn-

thankfull land, and inhabitants thereof, who hauing the Gospel of the Sonne of God, so liberally, purely, & peaceably offred vnto them, that no cuntrie hath, or hes had the like, not onely disdaines and abuses it by their wicked liues, but also stayes & taks away by such Sacrilegious dealing the ordinary means wherby the same shal be intertained, & without the which it cannot cõtinue, laboring so far as in them lieth, to banish Christ and his gospel from amongst vs, regarding more his pelfe nor himself, & are to be counted double murtherers both of bodies and soules of men, as hath bin told before.

Herefore, to conclude for the preset, I would earnestly exhort al them that fear God truely, & specially you of this congregation committed vnto my charge, (albeit I suppose there bee not many amongst you defiled with this filthy crime of Sacrilege) that yee bee not partakers with them, who are involued in this sinne, but rather abhorre and reprooue it. And if they will not heare your admonition, condemne their doctrine at leaste in your conscience. And this

I speake the more earnestly, because I feare there be some amongst you, that will rather pay your teindes and duties, to such idle bellies, as deuoure vp the sweat of your browes & your seruantes, for nothing doing to your commodity, nor to them that labour in the vine-yard of the Lord, & others to whom the same ought justly to perteine. And thinke it not sufficient excuse to say this is a common fault through the whole Country, which we cannot mend; for an euil thing the more common it bee, is the worse. And the Wise-man saieth, *Follow not the multitude in euil doing*: Therefore, suppose the committers of this crime amongst vs, like senseles blockes, passe ouer and shrinke not for any admonitions, exhorting them to repentance, & skarsely one amongst the whole multitude, labour to take vp him selfe and amend the fault, or to restore any thing wrongfully withholden by them from the Kirkes vse; and therefore the greater damnation abideth them, for ought we can see; yet thinke not with your selues we may do as other men doe, or at least behold their doings, and

Exod. 22.

and be nothing mooued there-with. For they that will not lament for the contrition of IOSEPH, that is, for the eſtate of the Kirk of God, being ready to decay and come to ruine, by the doings of ſuch vngodly Kirk-robbers, are not worthy to be counted amongſt the true members of Gods holy Kirk. The Lorde for his mercie graunt that all our hearts may be effectually mooued to know our dutie in this and all other behalfes; and that he will make vs obedient for our partes, to his wil and commandements, and put remedie to the deſolations of his Kirk, by ſuch meanes as he thinketh beſt.

To him be prayſe and glorie for euer and euer.

THE

AGAINST SACRILEGE

The second Sermon.

Rom. 2. 22.

Thou that abhorrest Idols, dost thou commit Sacrilege?

Onger discourse vppon this texte, besides the thinges alreadie spoken of, being required at my handes, according to my promise, to meete the objectiones and shifting excuses of men of this age, who cloke their avaricious and greedie appetites, to appropriate to them selues the Kirk-rentes, I am nowe (as the Lord wil assist me) to enter in to answere to such thinges as they may alleage, and commonly alleages for themselues, to colour their corrupted sacrilege. I intend therefore without more processe, to gather the same in such order, as I thinke the beste advised amongst them, might propone the same, and to giue particular an-

aunſwers thereto, with reſolution according to Gods word, & good reaſons and laws of men. And ſo to take away al vaine excuſes, whereby they would flatter thé-ſelues in their ſin, & fyle the eies of the ignorãt & ſimple ſoules, that perceiues not their driftes. Proteſting alwaies, that if (carryed with the zeale of trueth) in progreſſe of this mater, I vſe ſome vehemencie of ſpeeches, I do it not for offence of any particular perſon (the Lorde knoweth) but againſt the vice it ſelf, to labour ſo farre as in me lyeth to conuerte, at the leaſt ſome of them that haue paſſed ouerfarre, and ouerſeene themſelues in this matter, to amendement, by conſidering with themſelues, better then they haue done of before their duty by ſuch adverti ſement, as I am heare to giue you that heare, and all others that will inquire of me, cõcerning my judgement in this argument, & things depending therupon.

To come then to the firſt generall excuſe, and pretended reaſon that I thinke theſe men may alleage, who eſteeme this kinde of alleaged ſacrilege to be no ſin at all (it being ſo vniuerſall amongſt a great

greate multitude) or at leaſte, not ſuch a kinde of ſinne nor ſo odious, as I would aggrege it to be: they will ſay therefore that giuing their intromiſſion with ſuch thinges, as ſometimes perteined to the Kirk were vnlawfull (as they would not graunt it to be) yet the name of ſacrilege in the proper ſignification cannot be extended thereto. For euen in the lawes which I would alleage to prooue it, and by the writers there-upon we finde, it is not properly called ſacrilege, but *quaſi ſacrilegium*, or *inſtar ſacrilegij*, that is like vnto Sacrilege, to take away any of that money or other things giuen to that immortall God, for vp-hold of his Religion and ſeruice. I aunſwere, this is a poore ſhift, for the lawes giueth it as odious a name, calling it *crimen peculatus*, and *crimen læſæ religionis*, that is to ſay, a crime and guiltineſſe of ſtealing the publick money, and a criminall offenſe againſt religion. But (as I ſaid before) we take ſacrilege according to the meaning of the Scriptures, & good laws of Chriſtiã Princes aggreable thereunto. As indeede the very nature of thinges in themſelues leade vs vnto this, taking

Ad. ad Iulian. peculatus. l. 1. & l. 4. C. de Sepulchro violato. l. 1.

taking the argument from the leſſe to the more, that we muſt needes confeſſe it to bee a greater ſacrilege, to take from the Kirk a barrony of lande, or the teinde of a whole Pariſh Kirk, being of the valure of many chalders of victuall, nor a little thing, as a Silver cuppe or chalice out of a Sanctuarie or materiall Kirk. For the greater the thieft or ſpoyle of the holy thing bee, it is the greater Sacrilege. And as to the place out of the which the holy thing is taken, it makes not much to the matter in the law of conſcience. But to put it out of doubt, that this kinde of ſpoyling the Kirk, and defrauding of her right; by the worde of God is properly to be called ſacrilege: No man can deny but to ſpoyle God is ſacrilege. Now the Prophet MALACHIE prooueth againſt the Iewes of his dayes, that they ſpoyled God, *Becauſe they defrauded him of his teindes and offrings, and therefore were al accurſed with a curſe.* Which is the iuſt puniſhment of a Sacrilege. And very nature it ſelfe teacheth vs here-unto. For men vnderſtande naturally, and will confeſſe that to ſpoyle or ſteale any thing from a Mala.

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priuate man is a great offenſe: how can they then deny, that to ſpoyle or ſteale from God things dedicate to his ſeruice, is a more high and haynous tranſgreſſion, and cannot be more properlie termed by any name then Sacrilege.

But yet theſe men will alleage, that the authorities cited out of the Olde Teſtament, to prooue our purpoſe ſerue not ſufficiently to that effect. For, albeit in the Leviticall or Ceremoniall law of Moyses, not onely the teindes, but alſo the landes given to the ſuſtentation of the Prieſtes and Levites, were ſeparate from the common vſe of men, and called Holy; yet that law being abrogate, or at the leaſt ceaſing and taking end, the ſubſtance thereof being accompliſhed in Chriſt, wee are no further bounde to the obſeruation thereof. Therfore, the argument taken frō that law, concerning holy things, ought not now to haue place, neither concerning the teindes, which are not nowe addetted to be payed *iure diuino* (that is of Gods Law) as the Cannoniſtes ſpeake, and much leſſe concerning Temporall landes, giuen to the Kirke

Kirke in time of Papiſtrie, the which nowe ceaſe to bee of that nature, to bee eſteemed holy. Firſt, before I aunſwere, I am well contented there be a diſtinction made betweene the Landes and Teindes, leaving off to ſpeake of the teindes till afterwardes. Then I aunſwere concerning theſe Landes or annuall rentes, out of Landes delated and giuen to the Kirke, that although the Leviticall Lawe, with the Ceremonies thereof, concerning the outwarde obſeruation hath taken an ende, and is fulfilled in Chriſt; yet the ſubſtance of the policie, concerning interteinement of the ſeruice of God, and vp-hold of religion ſtill remaines. And it is no leſſe neceſſarie, that the miniſterie of God amongſt vs be mainteined; and that ſufficient prouiſion be made to ſerue other Godlie vſes, where-unto the Kirke-rentes ought to be applyed nor it was, that the Prieſtes and Leuites ſhoulde bene vp-holden in the time of the Olde law. And as to the holineſſe or vnholines of theſe landes and reuenues: albeit in their owne nature (as I ſaide in the former

former sermon) they be like other earthly possessiones; yet in so far as they were applyed to an holy vse, they may wel be called holy possessions and rents, as the Kirk is holy, to whose vse they are appoynted. Then I say, the end and firste cause wherefore these landes and rentes were giuen, being therewith to vp-hold the holy seruice of God, a like thing in substance, aswell in the Euangelical, as in the Leviticall Lawe; and the same being separate, dedicate, and mortified (as the Law speaketh) to that holy vse, it can no more be lawful to abstract the same from godly vses, then it was in time of the Olde law, the Ministers of the word not being otherwaies sufficiently provided, nor other godly vses for maintenance of religion, and of the poore members of Christ, being duely considered and serued.

But yet they may make instance and say, that the gift of thinges bestowed to to the Kirk of old, by our fore-fathers in superstition, was for a certaine cause, to wit, to pray for the Dead, say Messe, and do other superstitious & Idolatrous ser-

vice

vice, which nowe is not to be vſed. And therefore the cauſe ceaſing, the effect ſhould alſo ceaſe: And conſequently, things giuen for ſuch abuſes ſhould returne to the giuers or their aires, or at leaſt to the Prince to be otherwaies employed. As to that theorike of the Law, the cauſe ceaſing, the effect ceaſes (giuing it to be true) I aunſwere with a diſtinction, which the Lawiers themſelues make, that thereby, two kind of cauſes ar to be conſidered in thinges, to wit, the impulſiue cauſe (as they call it) and the finall cauſe. Now, albeit it be true, that the finall cauſe ceaſing, the effect cõmonly ceaſes alſo. Yet it is not ſo in the impulſiue cauſe, which although it ceaſis, it makes not the effect of the finall cauſe, which is the principall intention to ceaſe. But ſo it is in this caſe. For albeit it may ſtand, that one of the cauſes that mooued zealous men in time of blindnes, to giue diuerſe things to the Kirk, and to places then called religious, was to pray for the dead, and to do other ſuperſtitious ſeruice, being perſwaded by Monkes, Friers, and others of their opinion, that ſuch praiers

were valiable to deliuer ſoules out of Purgatorie, which may be called the impulſiue or moouing cauſe: Yet the principall & finall cauſe was (no doubt) that they minded to ſerue God thereby. For if they had not beleeued that theſe their gifts were to be applyed to the ſeruice of God, and godly vſes, they would never haue beſtowed any of their ſubſtance, rentes, or landes, to any Kirk or religious place: That this is true; It is manifeſt by their euidents, fundations, and charters, made vpon ſuch donations, in the words diſpoſitiue, euer bearing this clauſe, *Deo & Eccleſiæ*, to God and his Kirke, before they make mention of any Saint, place, or other vſe, whereto the ſame was to be applyed. Nowe, ſeeing all theſe gifts are ſo giuen, it is reaſon that God being firſt named in the Charters, haue the firſte place, as beſte and worthieſt, and as the principall receiuer of theſe donationes, which are nothing elſe but a ſmall portion of his owne, which hee before hath giuen vnto them. And as a certaine zealous man was wonted to ſaye, let God haue his life-rente, as the firſt perſon expreſſed

preſſed in the charters,& take thē the reſt.

I adde to this anſwere,giuing,not granting,that the principal & final cauſe wherfore theſe giftes were beſtowed ſhould ceaſe,yet it is no reaſō that the ſame ſhuld returne to the giuers or their aires, being once ſimply diſponed,& giuē to the kirks vſe; yea,and mortifyed therto,as they vſe to ſpeake,which the laws call publick dedication to the Kirke. But in the ſame,in that caſe,if the cauſe wherfore they were giuen be not a good cauſe,theſe gifts are to be applyed to more godly vſes,& not profane vſes, according to that common rule of the law,*quod ſemel Deo dicat eſt deo, &c.* The things once dedicat to god may not therafter be applyed to profane vſes, without great neceſſity,as for redemptiō of captiues, or other like caſes. And for this purpoſe maketh that notable deciſiō of *Modeſtine* an anciēt juriſconſult, wher of the ſum is. That a certain legacy being left to a citty,for a ſpectacle to be done in memorial of the dead,which was not lawfull to be done in ſuch a Citty. It were wrong (ſaid he)that this legacie ſhould returne backe to the aires of him that left it, but the ſame ought to bee beſtowed

Dd. de vſu et vſu fructu le gatis. L. la gatum.

ſtowed vppon an other lawfull vſe. And as theſe lawes conteine great equitie, ſo were they well practiſed in the dayes of AVGVTTINE. For when the Magiſtrates did take from the Donatiſtes their poſſeſſiones, which they had of the Kirke, and they complayned and diſputed, that none ſhould be deprived of their reuenues; for diſſention of religiones cauſe. That holy Father anſwered, that theſe goodes perteined to the Kirk, and therefore being rightly taken from them, who had made a ſeparation from the Kirk, the ſame ſhould be applyed to other Godly vſes of the Kirk. As to the Princes part in theſe matters, wee ſhall ſpeake (God willing hereafter) But yet to aunſwere further to theſe men, who obiect that their predeceſſoures (as they ſay) gaue ſuch landes and rentes vnto the Kirke, in blinde zeale, and ſo they haue reaſon to take the ſame againe. The antecedent or aſſumption of this argumẽt, albeit it were admitted to them to proue, I ſuppoſe it ſhould remaine vnproued by a great many of them, who are moſt greedie to inuade the Kirk-rentes nowe adayes. For ſuch as they be readiest (as the

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Proverbe ſaith) to eate the Kirk-loafe, then to giue it. Yet ſuppoſing it were verified, it is of no force to ſerue their turne, neither doth the conſequent follow thereupon. For although they, or their anteceſſors had giuen ſuch thinges to the Kirk, by what reaſon ſhould they take the ſame againe at their pleaſure? For what is freer then gift? or what is more vnhoneſt and againſt humanitie, then to take the gift againe being once freely diſponed? ſuppoſing it were giuen to a priuate man, whereof he had brooked long poſſeſſion. Howe much more ſhameles and vnhoneſt were it to the giuer to take it againe by force. Then by ſtronger reaſon ſhould this be thought vnlawfull, concerning things giuen to God and his Kirk, which (as the Scripture ſheweth) *cannot be redeemed again, but is to be reſtored whatſoeuer is defrauded thereof (although it were by ignorance) or elſe the value, with a fift part more*. To this purpoſe perteineth that ſolemne proteſtation, which the people made when they brought in their teindes and offrings to the Lord. And although theſe be coun- Leuit. 5.

ted among the Myſtical politick lawes, yet the ſubſtance thereof (as was proved before) remaines, to wit, the lawe ought not to defraude God & his Kirk of their duetie. To the which purpoſe, yet let vs heare what AMBROSE (a godly father) ſpeaketh of ſuch men, as would cal back againe that which they haue giuẽ to the vſe of the Kirk. There be ſome (ſaith he) who after they haue giuẽ their goods to the kirk, raſhly think to revoke the ſame, of whõ, nether the former gift deſerueth thanks, nor the latter doing is allowable. For the former lacketh judgment, & the other hath with it Sacrilege. There bee ſome whome it repenteth to haue diſtributed their goods to the poore; but concerning them that ſo repent, it is only to be feared, that they ſhal not repent of this their repentance. See how this anciẽt father doubts not to cal them ſacrilegious, who take againe from the kirk any thing, albeit they themſelues haue giuen it. To this agrees very wel the law of *Iuſtiniane*, in this ſentẽce. Seeing it lieth in the hart of a man, to do or not do any thing that he intendeth, it becommeth him, either no

C. de donationibus. l. ſi quis argentum § Sin autem.

not to proceede to the doinge thereof, or elſe haſte to performe it: Not defrauding his purpoſe by any craftie colour of his irreligious minde: & ſo much the more this ought he to take heed to, if the gift be depute to godly vſes or perſons of religiõ, leaſt he be found not only void of religion, but alſo vngodly. And ſo be ſubject not onely to the penalty of the law, but alſo to puniſhmente from heauen. And notwithſtanding, not only he, but alſo his ſucceſſors in this caſe ſhal be compelled to reſtore that which they haue taken & with-holden, with the reſt that followes. To the ſame purpoſe it is is ſaid in an other law, written in the ſame title of *Donationes*, ſpeaking of things giuen by mens predeceſſors, that it availeth nothing to ſay ſuch things perteined to our progenitors, after that the right and donation thereof is deuolved to others.

Yet to beamfill their firſt argument, theſe men may alleage & ſay, that things dedicate to the kirk in Papiſtrie, were dedicat to Idolatry; which was not only vnholy, but alſo abominable before god, & conſequẽtly the lands & rents ſo dedicat

can no waies be called holy, and so apparantly would infer, they ought not to be appplyed to the holy seruice of God, but rather to profane vses. This argumēt they see not how much it makes against themselues. For if those things offred to idole seruice be abhominable, why bring they abhomination into their houses? & so procure a curse against themselues. For the Scripture sayeth: *Couet not the siluer nor golde that is vppon their idoles, nor take it vnto thy selfe, least thou be snared therewith. Bring not therefore abomination into thine house, least thou be accursed like vnto it, but vtterly abhor it.* Deut. 7. Againe in an other place it is saide, *There shall nothing of the damned things cleaue vnto thine hand: That the Lord may turne from thee the fearcenesse of his wrath, and shew thee mercie, when thou shalt obey the voice of the Lord.* Deut. 13. Nowe although this bee written in the Olde Testament, it astricketh and bindeth aswell vs as the Iewes, *Not to couet after euill and vnlawfull things as they did. For these things are written for ensamples to vs,* 1. Cor. 10. as the Apostle sheweth. So albeit the law of Deuteronomy is not to be vrged precisely, in

al things, yet as luſting after euil thinges, i say couetouſnes, ſo thieft is euer thieft, and Sacrilege is euer Sacrilege.

But yet they whome we accuſe as ſacrilegious, may make inſtance, and ſaye, how can ye call alwaies things dedicate to Idolatrie holy things? And againe, if theſe things cannot be handled or intrometted with in any ſorte; how can ye applye the ſame to the vſe of the reformed Kirke, and true ſeruice of God? ſeeing ye abhorre Idolatrie, and hold ſuch thinges abhominable. For aunſwere, firſt I denie that theſe thinges were dedicate only to Idolatrie, for I haue prouen the contrary of before. And as to that allegeance, that thinges dedicate to Idolatrous ſeruice, if they be abhominable, how can they bee applyed to the ſeruice of God, in his reformed Kirke, being abhominable in themſelues? I ſay, Sirres, wee lack not examples of the Scripture, that ſuch things may and ſhould be employed to the true ſeruice of God. In the ſpoyle of *Iericho*, *The Lord commanded, that all the ſiluer and Gold, and other mettle that was found in the Citty, ſhould be put in the treaſure of the houſe* Iosua.6.7.

of

of the Lord. In the which (no doubt) many thinges were, that had bene dedicate to Idoles ſervice. And yet in the meane time expreſſe inhibition was made, that no particular man ſhoulde meddle with any thereof, leaſt he make himſelfe execrable thereby. And the puniſhmente that was executed againſt ACHAN, declared how far God was offended with that tranſgreſſion of that his commandement. The like may be ſpoken of things taken in warre by the Iſralites of their enemies, as of *Madianites* and others. And of Gedeon, *who made ſacrifice to the Lord of his fathers bullocke, and trees of the greue dedicate vnto Baal.* And vnder the Law of the Goſpell, the Prophet ſheweth, that the Gentiles ſhall bring al their riches to ſerue the Lord, and to beautifie the houſe of his glorie.

Iud. 6.

Now, becauſe in this there is no great queſtion, wee come to more pithy apparante argumentes, that our Kirk-robbers alleage for themſelues. The Kirk-rentes, (ſay they) namely, the firſt kirk-lands, for the moſt parte were giuen by Kinges, his majeſties predeceſſors, mooved of blind

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zeale to the Kirk, in time of Papiſtrie (for ſuch abuſes ar now aboliſhed) to abbaies principally, & other places called religious, to pray for the dead, ſing & ſay Meſſes, & to vſe other their ſuperſtitious ſervice. The which landes & rents ſo giuen, haue greatly hurte & diminiſhed the patrimony of the crown. Therfore the king with adviſe of his eſtates in Parliament, hes called in & revoked theſe donations, namely, of lands, & taken them againe to his Hienes own patrimonie & diſpoſition. And we againe, haue obteined ſome of theſe lands, erected to vs & our aires by liberality of the Prince in temporal livings or lordſhips. And ſo we poſſeſſe the ſame juſtly by our lawful titles, therfore we ought not to be rayled on, nor called Sacrilegious poſſeſſors. I anſwere ſimply (not for offence of any, but to vtter the trueth) that I judge theſe kinde of erectiones, or whatſoeuer new required titles by ſuch meanes that the poſſeſſours can pretende, to bee altogether vnlawfull. But this queſtion requires greater conſideration: which ſtandeth in two heads. The one is, what entereſte the Prince

hes

hes, or may iustly pretend in Ecclesiasti-
cal liuings. The other, what right or title
thereof, he may dispone vnto others. As
to the former of these two heads (with-
out offence of the Prince I speake) who
is prejudged by this kinde of dealing, as-
well as the Kirke: I say, that Kinges in so
farre as they be called, *nursing Fathers*
of the Kirke, they ought to see sufficient
prouision bee made for vp-holding the
seruice thereof. And the Kirk againe, to
bestow al dutie for furthering the Prince
in the publick affaires of the common
wealth. But the Prince to suffer the Kirke
to be spoyled, not hauing first prouided
sufficient meanes, how they that serue in
the Kirk may be honestly interteined ac-
cording to their estate, with the other af-
faires thereof. And the schooles and the
poore (who ought not to bee neglected)
well seene to, it cannot stande with good
conscience, law, divine nor humane.

Therefore I saye (albeit these men
alleage the Kirke-rents to be ouer-great)
to begin at the spoyle of the Kirke, the o-
1. King. 21 ther not being done, is a very prepostе-
rous order. When AHAB, *being but a ve-*

ry wicked king, would haue taken NABOTHS *vine-yarde, he offred firſt to giue him a better vine-yard then it was, or the worth thereof, if it pleaſed him* (he being a priuate man) *in money*. And ſo he would haue done indeed if NABOTH had accepted the condition. Now, to take from the Kirk of God, which is more then to take from any particular perſon, a greate parte of the rente thereof, and giue nothing in the place of it, nether to make ſufficient prouiſion for the neceſſarie affaires thereof, I thinke the like example hes not bene practiſed in any Chriſtian Countrie, or common weill heretofore. If they will giue inſtance of our neighbour cuntrie, there is no compariſon; for they that ſerue in the Kirks there, at leaſt are all wel provided of liuings. But they will reply; The Parliament & eſtates agreed to take theſe Kirk-landes: Therefore it ought to ſtande as a law, and it is not now time to diſpute nor reaſon thereupon. But howe many acts of Parliament (I pray you) are oftentimes againe called & annulled by contrarie actes. And how can they bee annaled or bought, vake (vnles they be

firſt reaſoned vpon: Yea, this were a very hard & rigorous dealing in a Princes minoritie, to make a lawe, not onely prejudiciall to God and his Kirke, but alſo to the Prince himſelfe (if it be rightly conſidered) and yet no man to haue place to ſpeake againſt it, or to ſute any reformation. The Civill law ſayes, that things done in prejudice of the Kirk, albeit confirmed by laws, are to be reſcinded. And al ſuch ſtatuts (ſayth the Emperour FREDERICK) ſhould be rayſed out of the act bookes. Moreouer, the lawes made after this maner, in prejudice of the Kirk, may well be declared null in themſelues. Becauſe the moſt part of them were made in the Princes minoritie, as alſo, becauſe that repreſented the third eſtate for the kirk, had no commiſſion nor power from the reformed Kirk, being Biſhoppes and Abbottes, the moſt parte of them, of the papiſtical promotion; proteſtation being made alſo publicklie for nullitie of their proceedings.

E. Caſſamus & L. decernimus C. de Sacroſ. Eccleſijs

But leauing nowe the Princes parte, who is indeede nothing helped nor inriched by theſe annexations & aſſumptiones

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ons (as they cal them) of the kirk-lands & rentes, for if they were, it ſhould be more tolerable. I come to the ſecond head cõcerning them to whom the Prince hath diſponed in heritable titles, the lands and rents of the kirk, by new erectiõs (as they tearme thẽ) in temporal liuings or lordſhips. Theſe kinde of diſpoſitiõs, I affirme to be more vnlawfull a great deale, nor if the Prince ſhould haue holden the ſame in his owne hands: yea, moreouer I ſay, ſik gifts & diſpoſitions may not ſtand lawfully, neither by the law of God, ciuil laws, nor municipal laws of the cuntry. For as to Gods law, I think they wil acclaime to no warrante of it, becauſe it maketh directly againſt them, & involving them in the eſtate of *Achan*, *Ananias*, & *Sapphira*, procureth rather a curſe againſte them, without they repente & amende. Which the Prophete MALACHIE pronounceth againſt ſuch perſons, as defraud the Lord of his teinds & offrings. And as to the civill Lawes & Eccleſiaſticall cannons, we may eaſely finde an infinite number againſt them, forbidding all alienation and diſtraction of Kirke-goodes to the

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vse of any particular person. Reade the first booke of *Iustinian* his lawes, in the volume called *Codex*, in the title, *de Sacrosanctis Ecclesiis*, and others titles following, wherein all alienation of Kirk goods is decerned null and of no force; and the things alienated are commanded to bee restored. To the same purpose agree the lawes of the newe constitutiones, called Authentickes, in so far, that it is not permitted to the Prince himselfe, to permit or change, with any of the goodes of the Kirk, called vnmoveable, vnlesse he giue the better in steede thereof. And Leo the Emperour sayeth, that they who dispone these goodes, haue Sacrilegious mindes. Therefore they who haue perswaded our Prince (whom God preserue) to annaly or dispone to themselues, or to others, these Kirk-landes, haue done that they might to haue him counted Sacrilegious as they are. The lawe also ordeineth the byers of these goods, to lose the price, and to restore the goods againe. The Notars of such contractes, to be banished; the Iudges that ratifie the actes of such alienationes, to bee deposed from their

Authent. de non alienand. rebus Ecclesiast. coll. 2.

their dignities. Howe much more are they to be judged gyltie and puniſhed, that take and vſurpe thoſe goods, without alienation to their owne commoditie.

I omit here to cite many ancient Cãnons of Councels to this effect, which would occupy long time. For, who liſt to reade the volumes of Councels & Cannon law, may finde them very frequent in many places. Comming then to the lawes of the Countrie, and naturall reaſon, the foundation of all good lawes, I ſaye, the corrupted dealing of our time concerning Kirk-robberie, is ſuch as can not ſtand, neither with the one, nor with the other. For, as to our municipal lawes, which are either the lawes of the Majeſtie, or actes of Parliament. The lawes of the Majeſty altogether diſallow, alienation of Kirk-goodes, in ſo far, as if the Prelate himſelfe, Abbote, or Biſhoppe, make any alienation or diſpoſition thereof, from the Kirke vſe: The byer thereof, ſhould loſe the price, and the landes may be taken againe by the King (but not diſponed to others) if they were giuen by

Tit de donationibus

him or his Predeceſſors. And in the acts of Parliament, both ancient and recent, commonly the firſt acte is, that the liberties and freedomes of the Kirke be keiped. And how can theſe liberties be but hurte, when the Patrimonie of the kirk is taken awaie, and giuen to profane men & profane vſes? Now, to come in particular, to theſe new erectiones, and new found infeftmentes of Kirk-Lands, they are (as I vnderſtande) of two ſortes. For ſome are giuen before the annexation of them to the Crowne, and ſome thereafter. As to the former, I woulde know by what law or reaſon they could be giuen by a ſimple gifte of the Prince, they being not yet come in his handes, and the conſent of the true Kirke, nauer had thereto? For, as to the conſent of Abbots and Biſhoppes, being the moſte parte of the Papiſticall promotion, and chiefe wrackers of the Kirke, not having any commiſſion from the true reformed Kirke, it cannot bee of any force in this caſe, to defraude the Kirke of her Patrimonie. And albeit, the whole Kirke had conſented, their conſente could not bee

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ſufficiene to dilapidat or annaly the Kirk Lands in propertie to any perſon, they being themſeues onely vſufructuares, and not proprietares thereof. And as to the Princes parte, can he take any priuate mans heritage from him, and giue it to whome hee pleaſeth, without conſent of partie, or forefaltrie? I think all men will ſay no. Much leſſe then, may he diſpone theſe lands from God and his Kirk, by ſik ſimple donationes. As to the other ſorte of infeftmentes or erectiones giuen after the annexation, they can be no better in effect, for giuing only for arguments cauſe, that theſe lands were lawfullie annexed to the Crown; whereuppon I wil not now farther diſpute. I ſay, the King cannot by the Lawes of his Realme, diſpone the ſame againe from the crowne, they being once annexed thereto. Reade the 43. acte of King IAMES the ſeconde, the 86. of King IAMES the Thirde, the 24. of King IAMES the Fourth, and likewiſe his Revocation, acte 83. As alſo the 4. and 54. of King IAMES the Fifth: with others, tending to the like purpoſe. Yea, they would make our Kinges Majeſtie

that now is, bee involued in *periurie* by theſe diſpoſitiones, it being expreſſe againſt his oath, made at his Hienes coronation, and inacted amongſt the acts of Parliamente. The time ſtraites me, that I cannot inſiſt longer vpon this head.

Before I ſpeake of the teindes, I come to the finall reaſon, or rather excuſe that robbers of the Kirk pretend for them to colour their Sacrilege. The landes, with the other rents of the kirk (ſay they) giue to it in time of Papiſtrie, ar ouer-large, & more then ſufficient, for the neceſſary vſes of the Kirk that now is. For, as to the Miniſters, what ſhould they haue but their neceſſary ſuſtentation, with an gray gowne, to go vpon their feete Preaching from place to place, as the Apoſtles did? They are as needie as the Papiſtes, with many other like tearms of their reproch-full Rethoricke. And why may not the King (ſay they) giue theſe landes to Noble-men, Gentle-men, and others, able to ſeruc his Majeſtie; the teindes being more then ſufficiente to ſuſteine all the charges of the Kirke. As to the eſtate of the Miniſters, it is no marvell that they

who

who care for no Religion, but ſo farre as it ſerues their turne, would wel vouchſafe to ſee them poore, that they might goe the lighter to heauē, following the foot-ſteps of IVLIAN the Apoſtate, or rather IVDAS the traytour, who enuyed for the oyntmente that was beſtowed vppon Chriſt, becauſe hee was a Sacrilegious thiefe, and would haue had the price thereof to his owne vſe. Would theſe men commend vnto vs ſuch poverty, as Chriſt did to the poore in Spirite, or if neceſſitie required, to looſe all thinges for his names ſake, they ſhould doe well. But ſeeing they labour ſo farre as they may, to bring Miniſters in contempt, & conſequently, to depriue the people of the doctrine of Saluation, we cannot admit their vngodly deuiſes: For wee haue ſufficiente warrant in the word of God, that the labourers in this function, are worthye of their wages; not onely for the honeſte intertenemente of themſelues, but alſo of their wiues, children and families, and for hoſpitalitie. Which things being miniſtred vnto vs, for our owne partes, wee would be well

contented, ſo that none of vs did lacke, as it was in the Primitiue Kirke, prouiding not the leſſe, that the reſte of godly vſes belonging to the Kirk, were not neglected: And ſpeciallie, the ſchooles and the poore: whoſe large portion ought to be comprehended therein, ſeeing the Kirk-rentes were juſtly called, the Patrimonie of the poore. As to the reſte (this being done) we might well agree, it ſhould ſupplie the neceſſarye affaires of the Prince, and the Realme, and ſuch other Godly vſes as the worlde allowes. And the enſample of former ages agreeable thereto haue practized. But the abuſes we cannot allow, as that of the Papiſtes, of defrauding the poore of that parte of the Kirkes Patrimonie, which ſhould be beſtowed vpon them.

Wee knowe that the Kirk-rentes of olde were divided in foure partes. The one parte thereof was beſtowed vppon the Paſtour or Biſhoppe for his owne vſe, and for vp-holding of hoſpitalitie. An other, vppon the reſte of the office-bearers, in the Kirke (called the Clergie.) The thirde, vppon the Poore.

And the fourth and laſte parte, vppon the interteinemente of Kirkes, Hoſpitalles, Brigges, and other publicke and Godlie affaires: Whereinto, the neceſſities of the Prince, and publicke affaires of the Countrie are to be alſo conſidered. But the degenerate poſteritie of the Antichriſtiane Kingdome, applyed all theſe goodes, to the interteinement of idle bellies, diuiding all the Kirkes Patrimonie, into Prelacies, and benefices, & in erection of Abbaies & Cloiſteres, ſuch as are not to be found in the booke of God, nor in any enſample of the Primitiue Kirke, and ſuch as ought to haue no place in any reformed Kirke or common wealth. And yet this corruption remaineth amongſt vs, by diſtributing of newe titles, not onely to the Biſhoppes, but alſo to Abbottes, and newe Prelates (as they call them) after the maner of the olde Papiſticall promotion. The affaires of the true Kirke, in the meane time, not being duelie ſeene to nor prouided. And as concerning benefices vnder Prelacies, there is a newe craftie and fradulente inuention

founde out, that these greedie gormandes haue procured at the Princes hands, gifts of the Patronages therof: therby to defraude best qualityed Ministers of the same, to giue them, or rather sel them to whom they can finde out, who wil becõtent to make vnlawful paction with them, to take a little portion of the fruits thereof (serue as they please) and let the moste parte remaine with themselues, either by setting of vnlawfull tacks, or by some other fraudulent way.

Now, concerning the teinds (whereof I promised laste to speake) I graunt indeede, if they were rightly gathered and bestowed to the right vse, they would both helpe the poore labourers of the grounde, and serue to many good vses in the Kirkes affaires. But as things howe go amongst vs, they are little more profitable to these vses, then the Kirk lands. For they who wrongfully haue invaded the landes, marke as greedely for the teinds: and are entred already in possession of the greatest part thereof. And now begin to make question, what title or right the Kirke hath thereto: So insatiable is the

greed

greede of them who haue once made shippe-wrack of conſcience, that they would Crucifie Chriſt againe for his coate. Herefore it is expedient, as ſhortneſſe of time will now ſerue vs, to deduce from the originall, the payment of teindes. Firſt, before any written law, we finde, *that* ABRAHAM *gaue to* MELCHIZEDECK, *as Prieſt of the moſte high God, teindes of all the ſpoyle that he had obteined of the diſcomfiture of the enemies, as pledge of his thankfulneſſe towarde God.* IACOB *alſo paſſing to* Meſopotamia, *after that notable viſion of the ladder, reaching from earth to heauen, made a ſolemne vow, that if the Lord ſhould be with him, preſeruing him in his way, and giue him foode and rayments, of all that the Lorde ſhould giue him, he ſhould render againe the teind vnto the Lord.* Whereby, it may well appeare, that by the very inſtinction of nature, this cuſtome was receiued amongſt the Godly Patriarcks, to giue teindes vnto God, of that whatſoeuer he beſtowed vpon them, aſwel by offring ſacrifices, as applying the ſame to the vtilitie of the Prieſtes of the Lorde, the poore, and other godly vſes. As to the offring Gen. 14. Gen. 28.

offringe and paying of teindes vnder the Law, we neede to make no queſtion, for the ſame is ſo ſet foorth at length, in the bookes of the Law of MOYSES, that the aduerſaries can make no argument againſt it. Wherein, among many other thinges it is written, *That all the*
Leuit. 27. *teend of the increaſe of the Lande, aſwell of cornes, as of beſtiall, perteined to the Lord as holy. And that he diſtributed the ſame againe to the Prieſtes and Leuites, and their fami-*
Num. 18. *lies, for their ſeruice.* And concerning the teindes of euerie thirde yeare likewiſe, that the ſtrangers, widdowes, fatherleſſe, and poore of the Land, ſhould be participant thereof, ſo that I neede not inſiſte further thereupon at this preſent: only, calling to your remembrance, that ſolemne proteſtation (of the which I made mention before) that the people were ordained to make, that they had brought in all the teindes of the Lord, & defrauded nothing therof. Read the place. Deu. 26.

IT reſtes to declare then, what hath bin the vſe concerning teinds, vnder the Goſpel amongſt Chriſtians. Certainely the vſe of payment thereof hath bin ſo ancient

ent, that it is difficil to finde out the firſte original thereof. Alwaies it appeareth euidently, that godly Princes & common wealths, being willing to provide the Paſtours, & other godly affaires of the Kirk, of competent living & reuenues, did rather chooſe the teindes, then any other meanes to that effect; following the example of the godly before the lawe, and imitating the cõmand of God, vnder the Lawe. Which loueable vſe and cuſtome, hath remayned through many ages (I thinke) inuiolably obſerued in all Chriſtiane kingdomes & common-wealthes. For it is more then a thouſand yeares bypaſte, ſince the payment of teinds vnder the Goſpell, was called an auncient cuſtome, which the Chriſtians had obſerued by common conſente, by ayplying the ſame to the vſe of the holy Miniſtery, the poore, redeeming of captiues, and other godly vſes, as we may finde in ſome ancient cãnons of councels. So that I can not marvaile ynough of a certaine man, who held himſelf very wel beſeen in the laws & cuſtoms of the cuntry, who was not aſhamed to affirm, that the paimẽt of

Concil. Matiſc. 2. Can. 5.

teinds

teindes to the Kirke, was not olde, but of late brought vp. If this man had red diligently the Scottes Chronicles only, he might haue found how CONVALL King of Scottes, who reigned about the yeare of our Lorde, fiue hundreth, threescore and eight yeares. Did statute by lawe, that the teindes of all that grew vpon the grounde, should be brought in vnto the Priests, and seruice of God vsed in these daies, which from that time by long prescription hath bene obserued amongst this our Scottish Nation. So that the question cannot nowe haue place, whether the teindes perteine to the Kirke or not, I will not deny but the teinds might be possibly changed, in other meanes of sufficient prouision for the Kirke, if such godly zeale were nowe amongst men, as was of olde time. But in so farre as we see the plain cõtrarie, that men are now readier to take away, thẽ euer our predecessors were to giue; it were a foolish thing to loose the certaine for the vncertaine, and that which is neuer likely to come to passe. And the wisedome of the fathers, hes done better in this behalfe, then any

Hector Boetius. li. 9. f. 192.

thing

thing that wee can nowe deuiſe or performe. Therefore, whoſoeuer now doe abſtracte the teindes from that vſe; for the which they haue bene of ſo auncient time appoynted amongſt Chriſtians, they are to be repute as violaters of that godly and publick order, and good eſtate of Chriſtian common-wealths and cannot be excuſed from Sacrilege.

Becauſe time haſteth me to an ende, I am compelled for the preſent to cut many thinges. Therefore I come ſhortly to the laſte refuge of theſe Kirk-robbers, whereas they alleage for themſelues, their titles, tacks, and aſſedations, with o-other euidentes & rights, whereby they poſſeſſe and brooke the teindes. And many wil ſay alſo, that their predeceſſors haue had kindneſſe thereto of long time by-paſt. And others, moreouer will alleage and ſay, wee haue payed great greſſomes, and ſums of entreſſe ſilver therefore, beſides our yearely dutie, hauing theſe teindes diſponed to vs, by them who had power to ſet the ſame. To aunſwere ſhortly to all this, firſt I ſay, to the takes-men, that all their tackes and titles,

for

for the moſte parte are ſet contrarie to the common Lawe, and ſo are null in themſelues. And if wee ſhall examine them by the Lawe of Conſcience, which is the chiefe Lawe that Chriſtiſtians ought to liue by; it will be harde to purge the taker and alſo the ſetter of Sacrilege. The firſt cauſe that mooued them of the Kirke to let teindes in tackes, was to defende them from the invaſion and violence of ſuch mightie robbers, as ſpoyled them of their poſſeſſions. For otherwiſe, it was not lawfull in any caſe by their Cannones, that any of them, (whome they called the Laick ſorte) ſhould haue any medling therewith. But now it falles out plain contrariwiſe, that none doe greater hurte to the Kirk, then thoſe tackeſmen, to make their own greedie gaine of the Kirk-goods. And they may wel be compared to manchpreſents (as we ſpeake) taking to themſelues the beſt parte, & leauing the leaſt portion to the Kirks vſe. So I ſay, that none of them that take the teindes in aſſedation, with euident diminution of the olde rentals can pretende, but they greatly hurte the

Concil. Carthag. 5 cap. 6.

Kirk,

Kirke, contrary to good lawes & conſcience. Yea, many of their tacks are not only within the halfe of the juſt availe; but oftentimes within the tent part, as victuals now are ſolde.

For colouring of the which, there is a new fraud of the law deviſed, by converting victuall into money, vnknowne to our Fore bearers, becauſe (ſay they) victuall was ſometime ſold for ſuch prices: But where finde they that argumente, *à poſſe ad eſſe*, valiable in the Law? or why preferre they not at leaſt, the option to the receiuer, rather to chooſe, then to the giuer? or els, why will they not paye Sterling money, or the auaile thereof, as good as it was, when victualles were ſo ſolde? Who will go to the market now with our money, to buy victuall of ſuch prices, and not be mocked? Whereto ſhould I inſiſte longer vppon the newe mainteined corruptiones of this age, to defraude the Kirke of her due right? It ſhoulde weary both mee to rehearſe, and you to heare it. When as tackes was not ſet in times by-paſte, but for the ſpace of nineteneyears the fartheſt. Now

Contra dd. ad leg. falcidiam. l. precia.

three nintene years, with three life-rents, all in one tacke, is thought nothing. Yea, many make heritage of the teindes, as they haue done of the landes. I omitte to ſpeake of the oppreſſion of the poore laborers of the grounde, whereof I made mention before. As to the kindneſſe, which theſe men alleage, becauſe it is of no force in the Lawe, I ceaſe likewiſe to ſpeake thereof. And as to the power of them that ſet theſe tackes, being for the moſt parte titulars of Prelacies, I counte them no leſſe Sacrilegious, then the takers, as if I had time and ſpace, I might eaſely prooue. With them alſo I joyne a ſort of falſe brethren, called, beneficed Miniſters, who make as little conſcience to dilapidate the kirk-rents, as others do. So that there is no eſtate free of Sacrilege in theſe vnhappie daies. Lorde ariſe and caſte out all byers and ſellers, with thieues and robbers, and corrupted Sacrilegious dealers out of the Kirke, and ſtirre vppe ſome zealous reformers of theſe manifolde deformities, that the Kingdome of Chriſt maye continue amongſt vs, and his Goſpell not be remo-

ved

remooved and taken from vs, for our great ingratitude and sinnes, in abusing the name and profession of the same. To whome with thee, O Father and holie Ghost, be all honour and glorie. Amen.

AGAINST SACRILEGE

The third Sermon.

Rom. 2. vers. 22. 23. 24.

22 Thou that abhorrest Idols, doest thou commit Sacrilege?

23 Thou that glorieſt in the Law, through breaking of the Lawe, dishonorest thou God?

24 For the name of God is blasphemed amongst the Gentiles, through you, as it is written.

MAny shiftes and excuses can the corrupt nature of man finde out, to cloake their euill doings and impieties, how justly soeuer they bee challenged for their faultes, if so be they

bee not willing to redresse the wronge committed by them. As in this matter whereof we intreate; ye haue hard what pretended excuses, and coloured reasons they whome wee blame as gyltie of Sacrilege, oppone and alleage for themselues: Which I suppose haue bene sufficiently aunswered and refuted in the former Sermon. Nowe it resteth to bee declared, what daungers such Sacrilegious persones stande into, and what punishment they be worthie of, who are gyltie of that crime: Aswell by the Lawe of God, as by humane and Civill Lawes. And if they will not amend for feare of these punishmentes, appoynted by good Lawes, because Magistrates in that parte doe not their office, and the law lacks execution in this corrupted estate. Yet at leaste, they may be terrified in their Consciences (if they haue anie feeling) with the examples of the extraordinarie judgements of God execute against the sacrilegious before our daies, when the world was not so male-part in rebellion as nowe it is. For the which purpose, I shall God willing, bring forth en-

enſamples, both of the divine hiſtorie and of profane writers; declaring howe the wrath of God fell vpon ſuch kinde of men from time to time: And how by the contrarie, the bleſſing of the Lorde hath continually bene with them, who travelled carefully to buyld gods houſe, and to beſtowe liberally of the goodes which hee gaue them vpon his ſeruice and ſervants.

Firſte, then to beginne with the puniſhmentes appoynted and threatned by Gods Lawe, againſte the Sacrilegious. In Deuteronomie wee finde it written, that all they who meddle with thinges dedicate to Religion (albeit it bee Idoles ſervice) and applie the ſame to their private commoditie, are to bee counted *Anathema*, that is, accurſed of GOD, both they and the thinges, which they by ſuch meanes appropriate vnto themſelues. *Bring not* (ſayeth the Lawe) *the abhominable thinge into thine Houſe, neither couet the Golde or Silver which is on them, to take it to thy ſelfe, leaſte thou be ſnared therewith. For it is abhomination vnto the* Deut. 7.

Lorde thy GOD: Therefore thou ſhalt abhorre it, becauſe it is accurſed, leaſte thou bringing the abhominable thing in thine houſe be accurſed, as it is. Nowe, that the like curſe falleth vpon them that take or with-holde the holy thinges, dedicate to the ſeruice of the Lorde; it is manifeſt in the Prophet MALACHIE, a good interpreter of the Law. By whom, God complayning vpon the Sacrilegious people of Iſrael in his daies, ſaith: *Ye are accurſed with a curſe, becauſe ye haue ſpoyled me.* And they demanded (as ſuch men are euer quarrelous) *wherein they had ſpoyled him: he anſwereth, in his teindes and offrings.* And before a little he had ſaide. *Will any man ſpoyle his gods?* Whereby he declared, that it was a rare thing (which is moſte frequent in our dayes) euen among Idolaters to commit Sacrilege. So we ſee the curſe is common, both vppon them that defraude the Lorde of holy things dedicate to his ſeruice, and them that appropriate to themſelues thinges dedicate to Idols. Moreouer, we finde Sacrilege puniſhed with death, in the perſon of ACHAN, according to the Lawe. For it is

Mal. 3.

written

written in Iosva, *He with whom the Excommunicate thing beis deprehended, let him be burned with fire, euen he, and all that hee hath: Because he hath transgressed the couenant of the Lorde, and committed a haynous offence in Israel. And the children of Israell* (saith he moreouer) *cannot stande before their enemies, for they are gyltie of a curse, and I will not be with you, till ye haue destroyed the accursed &c.* Here we may see it was not an extraordinary punishment that was vsed against ACHAN, but required the like execution in like case, for the transgression of the couenant of the Lord; to wit, first, to be stoned, according to the Lawe, and thereafter burned, with all his substance. Iosua 7.

Yet, men may say, this was a politicke Law, giuen for a time vnto the people of Israell onely. But, giuing it so be, yet it serueth to our purpose, to proue what punishment hath bene statute in the law of God against Sacrilegious persones, who so highlie provoked the wrath of God, not onely against themselues, but against the whole people, if they suffred

such impietie amongste them vn-punished: as this example of ACHAN declared. And let vs come to the New Testament, we shal perceiue the Lords wrath, not yet to be quenched against such persons: Consider our text, doth not the Apostle here, comparing Sacrilege with Idolatrie, declare that the Iewes, aswel as the Gentiles were vnder the wrath of God for this crime in speciall? And if we thinke the punishmente greate that fell vpon ACHAN and his familie: What lesse
Act. 5. was that which PETER executed vppon ANANIAS & SAPPHIRA for the like, or rather les offece? wer they not both severely dung dead at an instãt. And albeit, that was an extraordinary punishment, if respect be had to the person of PETER; yet non can deny, but it was justly deserved: Otherwise PETER had bene to blame in the execution thereof: whom the Spirit of God doth alwaies allow. Herefore, it avayleth not to extenuate this crime, and the punishment thereof, as that it were not so to be agreged, nor so seuerly damned vnder the lawe of the Gospell, as it

was in the Lawe of Moyses. For although Christian Magistrates, be not astricted to followe the pollicie of that Law in all poynts; yet Sacrilege is ay Sacrilege. And very sharp lawes hath bene made for punishment thereof, not onely by Christian Princes and Magistrates, but also by the Heathen Princes and law-giuers, in their natural zeale and light.

But let vs first come to Ecclesiasticall Cannons & lawes (I meane not the decrees of the Popes of *Rome*, whereof it is easie to alleage an innumerable multitude) but the ancient Cānons of Councelles, and the writes of godlie Fathers of the Kirke, agreeable to the Scriptures, The greatest punishment the Kirke hath to vse ordinarily, against all disobedient persones, according to Ecclesiasticall discipline, is Excommunication. For wee haue not to followe the Papistes, in exceeding the boundes of Ecclesiastical jurisdiction, by imposing corporall punishment, and pecuniall paines to the offenders, such as belong to the Civill Magistrat. So, I say, Excōmunication, but

excommunication in the highest; and most seuere sorte, was appoynted by the Cannons and Discipline of the Kirke, against the Sacrilegious. For (we know) there were two kindes of Excommunication; the one called the lesse, which was, debarring from the Sacraments of the Kirke; the other the greater, which was a cutting off from the whole society of Christes bodie; which by the ancient Fathers, is oftentimes called *Anathema*. Alwaies, it is not to be vnderstood, of that *Anathema*, whereof the Apostle PAVLL speaketh, taking it for *Extreme Exterminion* from Christe. But in the other sense, as the Fathers vsed it. It is taken in the eight Cannon of the Councel, called *Gangrense*, which was a very auncient and godly Councell, holden about the 324. yeare of Christ; wherein it was statute, that if any man presume to tak or dispone things offred to the Kirk, except the Bishoppe, or they who are depute to ministrat mercy vnto the poore, let him bee *Anathema*, that is, accursed with a greater Excommunication. To this agree, many other Cannons of Councelles, and auncient

Carthag. council. 4. c. 95. Council. Agathen. c. 3. & alibi.

ent Fathers, with more ſeuere wordes, threatning the judgementes of God, to the terrour of all Sacrilegious perſones, calling them murtherers of the indigent and poore. Yea they may be called murtherers both of the bodies and ſoules of men, as was declared in an other place.

And I cannot ſee how we, who nowe beare office in the Kirke, can bee excuſed, vnles we proceed after this manner, as the auncient Kirke did againſt the Sacrilegious of our time, who increaſe and multiplie daylie, In ſuch ſort, that without ſeuere diſcipline, they may not bee poſſibly ſuppreſſed. Yea, I feare me, the medicine be too late, and ouer-long delayed, which ſhould haue bene applyed to this kinde of diſeaſe. And as to the ciuill magiſtrates puniſhmente, wee haue little appearance to looke for it, ſeeing the moſt parte of theſe, who ſhould remeid this euill, are infected themſelues with the ſame ſicknes. Notwithſtāding, that all kinde of Lawes, both natural and written, diuine and humane, damne this haynous cryme. For it is euen againſte

nature

nature to the Children, to robbe and ſpoyle their Mother or Parents, as the Kirk of God, is to euery one that profeſſe themſelues to bee members, and haue bene brought vppe in the boſome thereof. And let vs ſee what puniſhment the naturall Philoſopher PLATO in his bookes of Lawes, judges the Sacrilegious worthie of. If any man (ſayth hee) be found ſo bolde to commit ſuch a haynous offence as Sacrilege (which wee would not, & can ſharpely beleeue to fal in any wel-brought-vp-perſō) if it be an, ſlaue ſeruant, or ſtranger, or ſtrangers ſeruant; let an mark be imprinted in his face, and hande; and let him be ſcourged with ſo many ſtripes as pleaſeth the Iudge, and then caſten out of the Cuntrie naked; that peradventure he may become thereafter wiſe, and of a better minde. But if hee be a Citiner (meaning, a man of free condition) who committeth at any time ſuch an offence; notwithſtandinge, his good education from his youth-heade, yet the Iudge may vnderſtande ſuch ane one to bee incurable. Therefore, death is the leaſte evill hee ſhould

Lib. 9, de legibus

ſhould ſuſteine. But it may profite for enſample to all others, if hee be deprived of all honoures, and baniſhed the Cuntrie. Yee ſee what equitie is in the Naturall man, concerning the puniſhmente of this crime.

Now, as to the Civil lawes, beginning at the lawes of the twelue Tables, which were moſte aunciente amongſt the *Romanes*; we finde the ſame to be moſt ſeuere againſt the Sacrilegious, bearing that they who did robbe by violence, or ſteale holy things, or things committed in cuſtodie to holy places, ſhould be holden as Parricides, that is, ſlayers of their Parentes. The Civill Lawes, collected by commandement of IVSTINIAN I, for the moſte parte, holde the puniſhmente of Sacrilege to bee capitall, that is, worthie of death. But they varie in the manner of execution. For ſome condemne the Sacrilegious vnto the beaſtes, ſome to be burned, ſome to be hanged. Alwaies, the puniſhmentes are ordeyned to be weyed, according to the circumſtaunce, and qualitie of the perſones, time, age, place, and eſtate of things,

L. Sacrilegij L. & Sacrilegij dd. Leg. Iulia peculatus

thinges to be execute more ſeuerelie or meekly, as the ſame required. For the puniſhment of them who were condemned to the beaſtes, is reſtrayned to ſuch onely, as break Temples made by hands, and take from them by night, things dedicate to God. But if any in day-light, ſhould ſpoyle any Temple, he is decerned to be condemned vnto the Mines, or if he were of honeſt parentage, to bee baniſhed in ſome Ilande, and to looſe all his goods. There be ſome lawes alſo, that make the puniſhment of Sacrilege to be extraordinarie. All agree in this, that is, requireth a ſeuere puniſhmente, as the higheſt kynde of thieft: And extends it (as was ſaide before) to all things dedicate to the ſervice of the immortal God: ſo that whoſoeuer ſubſtract the ſame, being once publickly dedicated, committeth Sacrilege; and if it were taken priuatly, to bee holden as the higheſt kinde of thieft, and like vnto Sacrilege. Now if we eſteeme it a greater fault, to take ſome little thing out of a material Temple, nor to bereaue and take great lands and poſſeſſiones from the Kirke, is not that to

L. peculatus. dd. cod. tit.

ſtraine

ſtraine out a Gnatte, and to ſwallow vp a Camell?

Would to God I were able to walken theſe men out of the deadly ſleepe of ſecurity, wherein they lye blinded by their corrupt affectiones; forgetfull of the vnhappie ende, whereto men are led by inſatiable avarice. But ſeeing neither admonitiones, nor ſharpe rebukes can ſerue in this declining age to remeid this euill, yet to make them more inexcuſable, if they will not amende. I will produce certaine enſamples of puniſhments of Sacrilegious perſones, partely taken out of the Scriptures, and partly out of humane hiſtories; of the which perſons, diverſe peradventure may be found leſſe gyltie of this crime, then theſe with whome we haue to do, to the ende, that our ſacrilegious (if they haue any feling) may feare the like judgements to fall vpon them; if not in this life, yet as great, or rather greater thereafter, when they ſhal haue no purſe nor penny, power nor meanes to make reſtitution of that which they haue, with ſo euill conſcience conquiſed. And firſt we haue two examples

which

which I haue diuerſe times heretofore cited of ACHAN, in the Olde Teſtament, & of ANANIAS and SAPPHIRA, in the Newe: who were terribly puniſhed for their Sacrilege; as it is at length ſet foorth in the Holie Hiſtories, bearing their doings and Tragicall ende of their liues.

Wee haue further, the Hiſtorie of 1.Sam.1.3. OPHNI *and* PHINEAS, *the Sonnes of* HELI, *who were both ſlayne of the Philiſtimes in one day, the Arke of God was taken,* HELI *their Father brake his necke, for the ſleuthfull correcting of them.* The chiefe cauſe of their puniſhmente, is evidently ſet downe to haue beue, *For the Sacrilegious abuſing of the Sacrifices of the Lorde, and making the people to loath the ſame, in bereaving the raw fleſhe before it vvas offered, beſides their other abuſes.*

Wee haue likewiſe the Hiſtorie of Dan.1. NEBVCHADNETZAR the greate, who ſpoyled the Temple of GOD in Ieruſalem, taking from thence ane parte of the Golden and Silver Veſſelles, appoynted for the ſervice of the Lorde, and carryed the ſame to the Lande of

SHI-

SHINAR to the Houſe of his GOD, putting the ſame in his Gods Theſaurie. Which not-with-ſtanding, it was the Lordes worke and appoyntmente, to witte, that Ieruſalem and the Temple ſhoulde bee deſtroyed for the ſinnes of the people: Yet the Tyraunte thought not thereof, but did execute the pryde of his hearte in that ouerthrow. Albeit there were ſome thinges in him, that may condemne the Sacrilegious of our Age, for hee tooke but one parte of the Veſſelles of Gods Houſe, and not all, and brought them not into his owne Houſe, but into the Houſe of his GOD; Wherein, (albeit ignorantly) hee placed his Religion: So hee declared ſome good Conſcience in his blinde zeale. *Yet the Lorde did ſeuerely correcte and puniſhe him in his greateſt pryde, depoſing him from his Royall Throne, and taking his hearte from him; For hee was driuen from amongſte men, and his hearte, made like to the hearte of a beaſte. And hauing his dwelling among the Wilde beaſtes, he eate graſſe like an Oxe: His bodie was wette with the deuve of* Dan. 4.

Hea-

Heauen, till his haire grew like the Eagles fe-
thers, and his nayles like the foules clawes,
vnto the time that he knew the most highest
to beare rule ouer the Kingdomes of men, and
to giue them to whom he will. And yet his
Sonne, or rather Nephew BELTSASER *did*
Dan, 5. *not humble himselfe, knowing all these things,*
but becomming worse then any his predeces-
sors, lifted vp his heart against the Lorde of
Heauen, brought forth the vessels of the Lords
house, before him in his banket, and he and his
Princes, his wiues and Concubins, drank wine
therein, and praysed their Idols and Gods of
Golde and Siluer, Brasse, Woodde and Stone.
And glorifyed not the God in whose hand his
breath, and all his waies were. Therefore the
Lord sent foorth the palme of an hande, and
wrote against him vpon the wall, declaring
the destruction of him and his Kingdome,
which came to passe that same night. For hee
was slaine, and his Kingdome translated to an
other Nation, As the whole Historie at length beares record.

2. Mac. 3. In the book of *Machabees* also (which, albeit they be not Canonical Scriptures, it may serue for record of trueth) there is a notable historie of HELIODORVS, *The-*

saw-

saurer to king SELEVCVS, *who hauing sente to spoyle the Temple of Ierusalem of the Thesaurarie being therein, whereof a great parte perteined to the widdowes and fatherlesse, was miraculously smitten by the hande of God, as hee was about to take away the money put therein: and was there left for dead, till by the prayer of* ONIAS *the high Priest, he becomming penitent, was restored to his health. And being returned to his Maister, the king demaunding who should be meete to sende againe for that purpose: Answered, if the king had any enemy or euill-willer, to send him. For he should receiue him againe wel whipped and beaten, if he escape with his life.* Because, the power of God was truely in that place, and hee that dwelled in heauen, would be reuenged vpon them, who did invade his house. In the same bookes, wee haue recited the miserable ende of King ANTIOCHVS, *who after he had sacrilegiously spoyled the temple of Ierusalē, passed in* Persia, *and preassing also to commit Sacrilege, in the Cietie of* Persepolis, *was ignominiously driuen back, & threatning to returne to Iudea, & make Ierusalem a burial place of the Iewes, was brought to extreame diseases, so that worms*

issued out of his body, and his seruantes could not abide the vyle stare of his Carcase: and so perished most miserable. The third example
2.Mac.12. we haue also written, of certain souldiers of IVDAS MACCHABEVS, *whoo were slaine in a battle against* Gorgias, *Gouernour of* Iamnea, *vnder whose coates were founde Iewelles of the* Iamnites, *which thing was forbidden by the Lawe. So euery man sawe,* (sayth the Historie) *that this was the cause wherefore they were slayne.* Whereupon Iudas *exhorted the reste of his armie to keepe themselues from such kinde of sinne,* because they saw that example before their eyes.

I adde hereunto, that which is written by IOSEPHVS, of certaine *Romane* Gouernours, namely, *Crassus* and *Pompeius*, of whome, the former going to warre against the *Parthians*, by the way, spoyled the Temple of Ierusalem, and tooke thence, amongst other thinges, a golden piller, of 150. poundes weighte, brake it in peeces, and payed the souldiers wages therwith: afterward, he fought against the *Parthians*, but with such vnhappy succes, that it was counted one of the greatest misfortunes & losse, that the

Romaines receiued: For, his Sonne was ſlaine with many Legiones of the Romane Chilvalrie; and he himſelfe being takē priſoner, fearing the enemies crueltie, was his own murtherer, by thruſting in his eye, the ryding wande wherewith he beate his Horſe: his head, & his right-hand being thereafter cut off; the barbarous people, powred molten gold in his mouth, becauſe, hee ſo inordinatly thyrſted afted golde in his life time. The other, *Pompeius* the great byname, being otherwiſe one of the moſt noble Senators and valiant *Romanes* in his daies, had no better ſucceſſe; after that he likewiſe had ſpoyled the Temple of the God of heauen in Ieruſalem: for he & his armie (although being of a greater multitude) wer diſcomfited by *Iulius Ceſar*, at that moſte famous battle of *Pharſalia*; And himſelfe ſhortly thereafter murthered, by young *Ptoleme*, King of *AEgypt*. The contrarie, fell foorth to ALEXANDER the great, who paſſing forward to his warres in *Aſia*, and comming to Ieruſalem, by the way, ſpoyled not the Temple of the Lord, but did great honour thereto,

& to IADDVA the hie Prierſt, granting to the Nation of the Iewes libertie to liue after their owne lawes, and for the ſpace of ſeuen yeares, they ſhould be free from all kinde of tribute. And hee thereafter had a moſt proſperous ſucceſſe in all his interpriſes.

I may for this purpoſe, produce many other examples out of profane writers: Of the which, for ſhortneſſe of time I will onely collect and touche compendiouſly ſome of the principals. There is a famous reporte, and paſt in a Prouerbe of the golde of *Tholoſe*, Which Q. SCIPIO and his ſouldiars ſpoyled from the temples of that Cittie: howe they thereafter come to a miſerable ouer-throwe. XERXES, king of Perſia, invading *Greece*, with an innumerable army, was ſhamefully driuen back, who ſent, as the hiſtorie reporteth 400. ſouldiars to *Delphus*, to ſpoyle the Temple of *Apollo*; who were deſtroyed with thunder and Tempeſt. Q. FVLVIVS FLACCVS a Cenſour of *Rome* (as VALERIVS MAXIMVS writeth) toke the pillers of the Temple of *Iuno*, out of the Cittie of *Locris*, & placed them

them in his owne house; but he fel there-after in a phrensie, and so still continued: And finally, hearing tel of his three Sons, whereof one being dead, another was grieuously sick, he died miserably: wher-with the Senate being mooved, decreed to send these Pillars againe to their own place. Of this and such things, it appeares to haue past in a common Proverbe and saying amongst the Romanes, that they desired no more harme to their enemies, then to haue the stones of a temple build-ded in their house. *Plemmenius* likewise, a Romane Legate, hauing spoyled the Temple of *Proserpina* in *Locris*, as hee car-ryed the spoyle in his ships, they were ca-sten and broken on the sea sands, and the spoyle founde & restored againe to the Temple. *Plemmenius* himselfe neuer pro-spered thereafter. But being driuen from *Italie* to *Greece*, dyed a shamefull death. The like thing also we reade of *Pyrrhus*, And concerning *Brennus*, an aunciente king of the *Gaules*, how he with his soul-diers, going to spoyle the Temple of *Del-phos*; the most parte of his armie was de-stroyed with an earth-quake, himselfe so

ſmitten, that for ſorrow he killed himſelf.

But men may ſay, why produce I theſe enſamples of ſpoyling of Idols, & Idolatrous temples. Seeing, that by the juſte judgement of God, they are, & were all deſtroyed. I anſwer, that the cauſe wherfore the true God of heauen, brought ſuch puniſhments vpon them, who ſpoiled their own falſe gods; was, becauſe of the Sacrilegious contempt, which theſe men did to them whome they helde for their gods; and ſo were enemies to their own relicques which they profeſſed: & that may ſerue to teach the Sacrilegious of our daies, how more ſeuerely they deſerue to be puniſhed, either here or hēce: who, profeſſing the knowledg of the true God, vſe ſuch profane attempts, contrary to their Religion. For, as to ſuch rake-hell houndes, as was *Dionyſius* the tyranne of *Sicilia*, who can but abhor the Sacrilegious, ſpewing out their abhominable taunts. Who after his Sacrilege committed in ſpoyling of his gods, hauing a favorable winde in his navigation, ſaide to men, yee ſee friends, how favorable the gods be to the Sacrilegious. And com-

ming

ming to the Temple of *Iupiter Olympius*, drew from him his goldē cloak, skoffing, that it was too heauy to him for sūmer, & too cold for winter, & taking frō *AEscula-pius* his golden beard, saide, it seemed not the same to haue a beard, & the father *Apollo* to be beardles. As also, when he took of al the gifts that wer offred to the idols, & holden vp by their handes, pretended that they were willingly holden out and presented to him by the good gods. *Brennus* also (of whom I spak before) as *Trogus Pompeius* reports, spoyling the temples of *Macedonia*, in skoffing maner said, that the gods who were rich, ought to bestow on mortall men, of their liberall gifts. But finally, this man in despaire killed himself: and the other, *Dionysius*, as is reported of him, vrged by an evill conscience, after that he had sold by publick voice & Proclamation, that which hee had spoyled from the Temples, compelled them to whom such things were sold, to restore them to the Temples, from the which they were taken. But how-so-euer this godles tyrant behaued himself: we read, how he was casten out of his kingdome,

& being brought to great neceſſitie, was compelled to teach a Grammer Schoole at *Corinthus*. And ſhall wee think the puniſhment of ſuch men, to be included only within the ſhort time of this life? albeit for the moſt parte, ſuch men eſcaped not the Temporal puniſhments, as the hiſtorie of their liues beares record.

But let vs come to the neater examples: when the *Wandals* came with a puiſſante armie, againſt Duke *Gabinius* (as is recited out of *Eutropius*) the Duke ſente ſome of his Captaines diſguiſed, to ſee whither the *Wandals* reverenced the Temples of the Chriſtians, or ſpoyled them. If they ſpoyle or violate them (ſaith he) the God whom the Chriſtians worſhip, whom I know not, if he be ſo powerfull, as they ſaye, will not ſpare them that ſpoyle his houſes; and ſo it come to paſſe: For the *Wandals* marching forwarde, inriched with the ſpoyle and goodes of the Kirke, were vanquiſhed in battell, ſlaine, & put to diverſe torments. But *Alaricus*, king of the *Gotthes*, by the contrary, hauing won *Rome*, would not ſuffer his men to ſpoile the Temple of S. Peter, nor touch any perſon

perſon being therein, for the reverence he did here to the place. *Clotharius* King of *France* likewiſe (as *Turonenſis* writeth) preſuming moſt irrelegiouſly (as certaine other Kinges) to take the goodes of the kirk into his Theſaurie, made an Edicte, that all the Kirkes of his Realme, ſhould pay to him the third parte of their fruits. But being rebuked of a certaine Biſhop, did retreat his ordinance: a rare example indeed; For there is a peſtiferous maladie, whereof few amend by repentance. To come yet nearer, wee reade of King William of *England*, called *Rufus*, who for his pleaſure & paſtime, to inlarge his Forreſt, demoliſhed 17. Pariſh Kirks, and all the Townes about them. But in the ſame forreſt, being at his game, in the very place (as ſome ſay) where one of the Kirks ſtood, was ſlaine by an arrow, ſhot at a Deere, by a certaine Knight, & there fell down dead immediatly. For pleaſure procured with the diſpleaſure of the Almightie, cannot well profite. As for domeſticall examples of Kinges of this Cuntrie, that were ſpoylers of the Kirk, or Kirk-goods, they are very rare to bee found:

found. Indeede wee reade of *Feredethus*, who arrogate vnto himselfe the kingdom of *Pictes*, after the death of *Hungus*, that he toke againe from the Kirk & ministers thereof, such as then were the possessions which *Hungus* (being a godly king) had giuen them: Which is reported to haue bin one of the causes, wherfore the kingdome of the *Pictes*, thereafter was destroyed.

But amongst the Scottes Kinges, I neuer read of any that tooke from the kirk any possessions. So did they abhor Sacrilege, howsoeuer otherwaies some of thē were wicked, and of licencious life: But it is easie to reade, of very many that bestowed liberally vppon the seruice of God: And more liberally in some respectes then become them; yet alwaies godly as they supposed in their zeale. And albeit, I allowe no superfluitie in the Kirke-rentes, but all may serue the king, in time of necessitie: Yet this may bee esteemed as one of the causes that GOD hes continued his Kingdome to stand so long vncōquished or translated to Forrayne power, aboue the continual

succesſe

ſucceſſe of an hundreth generationes. Which is rare to be founde in any other kingdome: The Lorde graunt that the corruption of our dayes, bring not ſuch an alteration as wee haue not ſeene, nor yet haue heard of before. Let vs therefore rather prayſe others, who by their godly zeale, haue advanced the ſervice of God, and beſtowed liberally of their ſubſtance, for maintenance of the ſame. In the booke of Exodus, wee haue a notable example of the people of Iſrael, *Who offered ſo liberally, to the wooke of the Tabernacle, that* MOYSES *vvas forced to cauſe proclayme throughout the hoſte, that no man or vvoman ſhould offer any further for the ſervice and building thereof. Becauſe there were yuough, and more beſtowed already to that effect.* Oh what contrarietie is betweene them and their doings, and our men, who cannot ceaſe nor leaue off without any hoe, to tak away that which hath bin offred by others, til almoſt now there is no thing left behind. *The like zeal of the Princes of Iſrael, in their offring at the dedicatiõ of the tabernacle, as is writtẽ of thẽ.* wherto I remit you for ſhortnes. This zeal

Exod. 36.

Num. 7. Pſal. 122.

is

is commended by DAVID in the Psalme, 122. *whereas he reioyced at the readines of the people, to serue God in his Tabernacle.*

And because I haue begun to make mention of King DAVID, and the zeale of the people in his daies: Let vs heare what vehement zeale was in himself, in this behalfe, to provoke others by his example. First, hee called for the Prophete NATHAN, *saying vnto him; behold, I dwell in*
2.Sam 7. *an house of Ceder trees, and the Arke of the Lord is vnder courtaines, thinking it an vnmeete thing, that his Royall Palace should be more honorably handled, then the house of his God. And when* NATHAN, *finally resolued*
1.Chro.22 *by the Oracle of God, declared, that it should not be he, but his Sonne that should buyld an house vnto the Lord: He ceased not to prepare all thinges necessarie for that worke, in his dayes. And to exhort grauely, his Son* SOLOMON *to accomplish the same. Declaring how he, according to his habilitie, had separated for the performing of that buylding, an hundreth thousand talents of Gold, & 1000000. of siluer, brasse & iron, without weight, besides wood & stone. To the which great preparation, (not thinking it ynough, he desired* SOLOMON

MON *& his Nobles, to adde more, as they did in very deed liberally and magnificently*: As the holy Hiſtory beareth record. *Beſides, this K.* DAVID *left of his own money (beſides that which he had cõquiſhed of his enemies) to the ornament of the walles of the Temple, and other ſuch vſes, three thouſand talents of gold of* Ophit, *and ſeuen thouſand talents of fined ſiluer: Exhorting the Princes of Iſraell, according to their facultíes, to follow his enſample: Who being inſtigate by him* (far vnlike our degenerate Nobilitie) *gaue freely to the worke of the Lorde, 5000. talents of golde, and 10000. talents of ſiluer: Of braſſe 18000, and of Iron, 100000 talents, which will amounte to exceeding ſummes of our money. And it may be iudged, that King* SALOMON *doubled more.* Now, if ſo much was beſtowed vpon a materiall Temple building, what ſũmes thinke yee, were employed yeerly for interteinemẽt of the Prieſts & Levits, who had not onely the teindes of the whole Lande, but alſo the great offrings, and firſt fruits of the increaſe. 2. Chro. 29

But if any wil alleage, that this Cuntry which we inhabit, is poore, in reſpecte of the Lande of *Canaan*, that flowed with

milk

milke and hony: and therefore may not ſpare ſo large proviſion vpon the Kirkes affaires. I would anſwere and demaund, who makes it poore, ſo much as you inſatiable pullers away of the rent already giuen to the Kirk, to your particular vſes, provoking thereby the Lorde to withdraw his bleſſing from the Land which otherwiſe were able to yeeld ſufficient proviſion, both for the Kirk, King, and common wealth. Doth not God ſay by his Prophet: *Bring all the teinds in my Theſaurie, that there may be meate in my houſe,* Mal. 3. *and proue me now in this, ſayth the Lorde of Hoſtes, if I ſhall not make open the Windowes of Heauen, and poure downe a bleſſing vnto you* And SOLOMON ſayeth, *Honour the Lord with thy ſubſtance, and with the firſte fruites of all thy increaſe: ſo ſhall thy Barnes be filled with abundance, and thy preſſes preſt with new wine.* Is it not a miſerable thing, and vnworthie to bee heard tell of, in anie forrayne Countrie, that the Levites of Iſraell, who were in number 38000. aboue twentie yeares of age, with their wiues and children, and the whole poore of the Lande were ſo liberallie

pro-

provided for and interteined ſufficiently. And nowe amongſt vs, albeit it were but 600. Miniſters to ſerue the whole Countrie of *Scotland*, ſufficiente liues cannot be provided for them? yea, of them that are planted, a greate number were left little better then begging, and ſome notable men left altogether deſtitute? O miſerable age, and vnhappy dayes that we be fallen into? Shall not the Papiſtes in their blinde zeale, ryſe vp in judgemente againſt this vnthankful generation, who ſuſteined thouſands in their Kirkes, Abbaies, and Cloiſters, beſides that which they delt to the poore, vppon the Kirke-rentes: And nowe there be not ſo much lefte, as to ſuſteine a fewe Miniſters, Colleges, and Schooles, albeit the poore ſhould be vtterly neglected.

May it not greatly aſhame Chriſtian Princes and others, that ſpoyle and ſuffer the Kirk of God to be ſpoyled. When as *Cyrus*, *Darius*, and *Artaxerxes*, heathen Princes, did beſtow liberally, to buylde vp the temple again in Ieruſalem, which NEBVCHADNETZAR had deſtroyed,

as

as the books of *Esra* and *Nehemias* beare record. And the same *Cyrus* reverencing the God of heauen, of whom he had but little knowledge, did sende againe the vessels of golde and siluer which NEBVCHADNEZZAR had taken, to be restored to the temple of God, vnder the hand of *Zerubbabel*. Whereto should I insist to recite other examples, as of *Asa*, *Iehoshaphat* *Ioas*, *Ezechias*, and *Iosias* Kinges of *Iuda*, whose diligēce was very careful in repairing the house of the Lorde, and prouiding for the Priests & Levits, in such sort that great heapes were left, after that all were fully satisfyed: wheranent, because shortnes of time, cuteth of amplificatiō, I remit you to the histories of the books of the kings & chronicls: wherein also, may be found, how because these Kings were zealous mainteiners of the true religion, & holy ministerie, God prospered them inal their affairs, so long as they persseuered thereinto. I might also recite a greate Catalogue of christian Princes, who following the example of such anciet kings doted the Kirk with sufficient patrimonie. As the zeale of *Constantine*, & others

godly

godly Emperours and Kings, yea, euen of the Kings of our owne Nation, who haue bene (as our Chronicles and auncient monuments beare record) very liberall in this behalfe: But I may not rehearse euery particular.

Onely this I conclude, seeing that without Religion and iustice, no common wealth can stande (for these are the two pillers, whereby the estate of all well governed cõmon wealths is vp-holden) it is greatly to be feared, least this our cõmon wealth shal come to great desolatiõ & decay, vnles speedy remedie be found out to stay the inconvenientes and dangers that be at hande. For as to Iustice, where is it? when wrong partiall dealing in iudgement and oppression, yea, not onely Sacrilege, but Sorcerie, bloodshed, adulterie, falshood, and all other abhominable enormities, reigne at such libertie without punishment. And as to Religion, how can it but decay? vnlesse God speedely put to his extraordinarie hande, when all ordinary meanes are taken away, whereby it should be intertei-ned: and Idolatrie and Atheisme already

entred in place thereof, in many partes of this Land, and like to enter further dayly. For albeit, many Kirks of the Realme, lack the Miniſtrie of the worde; there is no meanes left to provide them, for all the Kirk-rent is exhauſted vpon greedie gormandes, careleſſe of Religion, and that would with IVDAS ſell Chriſt, or with the godleſſe ſouldiars of PILATE, crucifie him for his garments; who haue never left off gaping, and ſhameleſly vrging ouer-liberal a Prince, till they haue gotten all in their handes. Example wee ſee this day, when as the poore Miniſters come to that woeful platte, or ſend their Commiſſioners, thinking to haue the Kirkes planted with ſufficient Miniſters and ſtipendes, they are ſent home emptie, when they haue wayted long on without all comfort. For there is nothing to augment, or advance any man, to any vacant roome, vnleſſe one Miniſter take from another; and ſo be exponed to the mockage of theſe, who haue ſpoyled the rentes whereupon they ſhould be ſuſteined, when they ſee them contending one againſt another.

And can the King (thinke ye) bee in a good caſe, when the eſtate of the Kirke, which was the firſt in Parliament, is ſo wracked? No, for if he euer haue warre, or other great enterpriſes ado, as it is likely he is ſhortly to haue: he ſhall lack that (to ſpeake worldly) which was his principall reliefe and ayde: to wit, the Theſaurie of the kirk, to advance ſuch weightie affaires. For as to thē vpon whom the ſame is vnworthely beſtowed (I meane the Kirk-lands and rents) they ſhall fayle him in his greateſt neede. For it is not his weale nor ſtanding that they haue ſought, but their owne particular, with inſatiable greede. And now when they haue done, the Lord ſhall ſo blowe vpon it, that they or their aires ſhalbe no better of it: but rather (becauſe it is procured with Gods curſe) it ſhall wrack the reſt of their patrimonie and auncient houſes, as experience hath prouen in ſome of them. And as to the Kings Hieneſſe, ſeeing that his eſtate, euen from his Coronation, hes bene ſo annexed and joyned with the eſtate of the Kirke, and reformed Religion, that it hath wel ap-

peared

peared hitherto by experience, that the ſtanding of the one, hath made the other alſo to ſtande: it is juſtly to be feared (the Lord auerte it) that the ruine and decay of Religion in this Realme (if God of his juſt judgement ſuffer it) may bring exceeding great daunger to his perſon, and royal authoritie, yea, to the whole Common-wealth. And the authors of theſe new erectiõs of the kirk lands in heritable titles to themſelues, and priuate vſes, ſhal be a chiefe cauſe thereof: and that by with-drawing the bleſſing of God from the Lande, and procuring his wrath againſt the ſame. The Lord remeid theſe appearing euilles by time.

Now, returning to our Text, & concluding with the Apoſtle, in the verſes following, as he moſt juſtly rebukes the Iewes, who glorȳed in the law of God, and yet by breaking of the Law (by their Sacrilege, and other odious crimes) diſhonored his holy Majeſtie, declaring thereby the light regard they had to that Religion, which they outwardly profeſſed, ſo it may be juſtly layd to the charge of this vnthankfull generation, that our

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outward glorie in his religion, shal turne to the vtter confusion of many in this Lande. For if it be (as it is most true) that they who honour GOD, hee shall honoure them, and they who contemne his worshippe, shall bee brought to ignominie and shame. Howe can our feined profession worke otherwaies, when the Doctrine of Christ his Evangell, whereof men wil so babble in their idle talking, is so profaned and abused in their daily life and conversation: So that the name of that good God, who hath so meruelously and mercifully in-lightned this nation aboue others, with the knowledge of his vndoubted trueth, by our licentious liuing, being trod vnderfoot, his name is euill spoken of by our occasion amongst the Papistes, and other enemies of the trueth, as it was amongst the Gentiles, by occasion of the euil liues of the Iewes in their captiuitie, as the Prophet EZECHIEL here cited by our Apostle doth testifie of them. And is it not Ezech. 36
a most vnworthie thinge, that they who haue receiued glorie and honour from God, as our vnthankfull Nation haue, in gran-

granting vs so great light, denyed to o-ther mightie Kingdomes of the earth, to render againe such graceleſſe payment, as ſo to diſhonour his holy name. The Lord graunt, that at leaſt, ſo many as are appoynted for his heauenly kingdome, may ſpeedily repent with ZACCHEVS, & the reſte, at leaſt, be not inferiour to IVDAS, who reſtored that which hee had moſt ſacrilegiouſly taken, in betraying his Maiſter the Lord Ieſus our Saviour. To whome with the Father and the Holy Ghoſt, be all honour and prayſe for euer.

FINIS.

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